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NORTHERN NAJD

GENERAL EDITOR: N. M. PENZER, M.A., F.R.G.S.

“The sobriety of his descriptions and the evident familiarity with all things Arab, inspire the reader with great confidence in Guarmani, and support his evidence against that of others. . . . Long a student of Arab nomads, he shows a knowledge of Beduin tribes and sub-tribes almost on a par with Doughty’s.”

D. G. HOGARTH

NORTHERN NAJD

A Journey from
JERUSALEM to ANAIZA
IN QASIM

BY

CARLO GUARMANI

Translated from the Italian by
LADY CAPEL-CURE

With Introduction and Notes by
DOUGLAS CARRUTHERS
Gold Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society



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PREFATORY NOTES

“The following translation was prepared in London in 1916, at the instance of Mr Douglas Carruthers, then Honorary Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, who himself has been to Taima and over other ground traversed by Guarmani.

“In consideration of the comparative rarity of Guarmani’s original book and the high added value which Mr Carruthers’ Introduction and notes confer on the translation, the Arab Bureau accepted his offer of the latter and arranged for it to be printed in Cairo as a British Government publication for Official use only.”

Arab Bureau, Cairo
October 1917

These War-time publications must be getting scarce, if indeed they have not already vanished. In order, therefore, to preserve this one from extinction, I have thought it worth while to reprint the whole in a revised and more fully annotated form. This is necessitated by the fact that our knowledge of the region (or of most of it) has increased so largely since 1917, and this very fact gives a good reason for its reissue. The original translation, which was made by Lady Capel-Cure, was in no way intended as a permanent contribution to Arabian literature, nor indeed, in the first place, for publication at all. It has, however, been verified by the Jerusalem edition, and found to be without exception: it therefore stands in the original form as issued by the Arab Bureau. My discourse on Guarmani, on the other hand, and my elucidation of his text, have been entirely revised, and bear little or no resemblance to those issued with the Cairo edition. I have to express my gratitude to the Foreign Office for raising no objection to the publication of a work formerly produced for *Official use only*; also to Mr H. St J. B. Philby for allowing me free access to his unequalled store of knowledge on all things Arabian.

DOUGLAS CARRUTHERS

August 1937

INTRODUCTION

CARLO CLAUDIO GUARMANI was born in the city of Leghorn on the 11th December, 1828. His father, Agostino, was a native of Bologna, and his mother Argentina Vignozzi came from Leghorn. The father traded at first with great prosperity as an insurance and shipping agent, later as a silk-merchant, but when his business failed and he lost his fortune, he decided to emigrate with his family to Beirut. Carlo, then a young man barely twenty, welcomed his father's decision, having shown a liking for travel from early youth. In 1850 he sailed with his father, two brothers and three sisters (his mother had died some years before) for Syria. At Beirut Carlo at first devoted himself to trade, but he was not suited to a sedentary life. He soon became the Agent of the Imperial French Postal Service at Jerusalem,¹ but also extended his trading activities by establishing relations with the nomad tribes of the borderlands. Although he held this official post for twelve years, he must also have had ample leisure at his disposal, for he was able to visit Egypt, and to return to Italy on several occasions. He was also free to devote himself to his own special interest, namely the study and acquisition of the best types of Arab horses. This, no doubt, took him into the desert marches of Palestine and Syria, but how far he went and where it is difficult to discover. He certainly became acquainted with the great Badawin tribes that pasture between the settled lands of Syria and those of Northern Najd, and obtained a knowledge of tribe and sub-tribe which stood him in good stead later on. He says he reached Jauf on one occasion (see p. 59), but we have no confirmation of this; and as it was said to be in 1851, the year after his arrival in Syria, it seems rather doubtful. The outcome of these early expeditions was the publication of his book on the Thoroughbred Arabian Horse, "*EL KAMSA*" [Al Khamsa—"The FIVE", that is to say the five (mythical) strains of noble pedigree, or known descent, viz. Kuhaylan, Ubayyan, Saqlawi, Hamdani, and Hadban].

This book, published in 1864 and again in 1866, was dedicated to Victor Emmanuel II, King of Italy. It dealt solely with the Arab horse, its various strains, and the system which the author believed should be followed in order to improve the breed. From it we learn nothing of his

¹ I cannot discover on what grounds Hogarth refers to Guarmani as "Consular Agent to the King of Prussia at Jerusalem"; there is nothing to this effect in his Biography in the *Nuove Biografie Livornesi*, F. Pera, Livorno, 1895.

travels, but it shows that he must have seen a good deal of the Syrian hinterland, probably visiting Bani Sakhr, Bishr and Ruwalla encampments, as being the most likely to produce the type of horse suitable for his market. However, a few contemporary notes given in the Preface of both editions of *El Kamsa*, by Dottore Ansaldi Feletti, who had known Carlo Guarmani in Jerusalem, tell us how the latter had developed since his arrival in Syria.

“Guarmani”, he says, “is gifted with an adventurous spirit, high courage, and a thorough knowledge of the Arab tongue. He frequently lives a nomadic life. Inured to fatigue and hardships, thoroughly conversant with local usages, dressed as a Badawin and mounted on horse-back he penetrates far into the desert. There he spends long days living in a tent, studying the Arab horse, and becoming so well acquainted with the various tribes that I fully believe him to be the only European able to scour the desert without risk. He is as fully acquainted with the cunning as with the ingenuity of the Badawin, he selects with great knowledge and buys shrewdly splendid stallions. Even I was amazed on beholding some of his horses, and still more amazed on learning the price. I feel I can assert without fear of being proved mistaken that any Government which succeeds in making its own the truly exceptional gifts and knowledge which this young man has been shown to possess, would be rendering a signal service to its country.”

The result of this tribute, or rather of the meeting of the two in Jerusalem, had already borne fruit, for Carlo Guarmani had been called to Paris and to Turin in 1863, where both French and Italian Governments appeared to be anxious to acquire his services. At any rate he returned to Palestine later in the year, commissioned to buy stallions for both the French Government and for H.M. the King of Italy, and the journey which he undertook in 1864 was outwardly expressly for this purpose. In this he succeeded, and four months later, after a hazardous journey, he returned with his string of horses complete, and settled down in Jerusalem to write an account of his experiences. Two years later the book was published by the Press of the Franciscan Fathers in Jerusalem. For the next six years we hear nothing of Guarmani, but he is said to have spent some months in Aden (Zehme says he acted as French Consul there), and eventually to have returned with his family to Genoa, where he became one of the most honoured merchants of the City. He died in October 1884, at the age of fifty-five.

A curious side-light on the conditions of those days is that a newly-arrived immigrant could be chosen for such a post as Director of the Postal Service of a Government not his own and within such a short time

of his arrival in a strange country. But when we consider that Carlo's elder brother, Lowzynski, within a few years of his arrival at Beirut, attained to the position of "British Agent" at Marash, it is not so surprising.

Lowzynski's appointments had a tragic ending and the episode is perhaps worth recording as showing the state of affairs in the Near East at that period. The Crimean War, then drawing to its close, had caused a good deal of activity even in Northern Syria. Turkish troops were being recruited and embarked at the port of Alexandretta for transport to the Crimea. War material, horses and men were in demand, and it appears that Lowzynski was employed by the so-called Land Transport Service in buying up saddlery for the campaign. His chief activities took place at Marash, a town with a reputation for disorder and fanaticism, and therefore not an easy place for a European to do business. It appears that Lowzynski did not always pay cash down for the goods he bought, and there arose a law-suit between him and his creditors, which ended in a local riot. Now at the enquiry after the massacre that followed, it was divulged that Lowzynski had become implicated with those fire-brand Armenians, the Zeitunlis, a relationship which was bound to foster ill-feelings amongst the local inhabitants of Marash. Whether or not this fact was the cause, or merely the excuse, for another massacre (the previous one had been in 1850) we cannot know. But while the law-suit was being heard in the local court, and Lowzynski was being interrogated, there seems to have been a good deal of abuse and recrimination on both sides. The European probably lost his temper with the Qadhi, claimed the right to refer his case to the Mejlis at Constantinople and left the court in anger. The result of this was said to be the rising of the populace, but others say that the riot had been planned before the scene in the Council Chamber. However, the inhabitants of Marash, always ready for the chance to kill off Armenians, were easily incensed by the report that Lowzynski was even then harbouring Armenians in his house. The result was inevitable. According to his biographer

Fully four thousand armed Mussulmen surrounded his house, calling on him to lower the flag. He refused thus to insult the British standard, whereupon an intense fire blazed from the rifles of the mob. He returned the fire, wounding and making victims before he himself sustained wounds, first in the leg and then in the chest, and finally succumbed. The Barbarians then set fire not only to the house but also to the whole quarter, which became a raging furnace. Two faithful servants who had been Lowzynski Guarmani's companions in earlier days in the deserts of Syria, in the mountains of Kurdistan, and on the Turcoman plains, tried to save his widow and one son, by seeking escape through a passage not yet cut off.

But distraught by despair and grief, the mother refused, and mourning at the absence from her side of her other younger son Giulio, she perished with her child in the flames beside her husband's body, upon which at the end the ashes of the British flag fell. The Government which this victim of high rank represented avenged this infamous crime, and secured the sole survivor of the unfortunate family the means of a comfortable livelihood.

The survivor was the little Giulio, who was found under a heap of corpses, and (as another authority says) was the recipient of a pension for life from both England and Turkey.

This episode resulted in a prolonged investigation. Hundreds of people were arrested and convicted. A Commission of Enquiry was sent from Stamboul, and nothing much happened until Marash distinguished herself again in like manner. The Lowzynski episode may be regarded as forecasting the Syrian massacres of 1860, which culminated in the intervention of the Great Powers.

This particular date, and the subsequent happenings in the Levant, makes one slightly suspicious of Guarmani's real objective in Arabia. Why was it necessary to recall the Italian in person from Jerusalem to Paris? It reminds one of Palgrave's summons from the Lebanon a few years before, and Palgrave's real commission was clear enough. Was Guarmani the horse-cooper pure and simple he pretended to be, or was there also a political background to his journey? We cannot know the true facts, but, looking back at events in the Levant in that decade of the nineteenth century, we realise what critical years they were. France had every intention of establishing a permanent occupation of Syria. The Suez Canal project created a thirst for knowledge about those neglected deserts that lay beyond it, and a sudden desire to cultivate relationships with the dominant powers in Arabia. In fact, all eyes, especially those of France and Egypt, were turned in that direction.

The place Guarmani occupies in the story of Arabian exploration is significant. Prior to the year of his visit to Najd, namely 1864, various early travellers had done little more than scratch the surface. Some of them had been pilgrims attracted by forbidden Mecca, such as Varthema, Badia, Seetzen, Burckhardt and Burton. Others had attempted the fertile Yemen, or the more inaccessible but as fertile Hadhramaut—Seetzen, Niebuhr, Arnaud, Wrede and Wellsted. But up to the early part of the nineteenth century the heart of the land was still practically untouched. Four and a half centuries had elapsed since the travels of Ibn Battuta.

It was not, therefore, until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century that serious exploration started. Apart from the somewhat forced first crossing of the peninsula by a European—for Sadlier, in 1819, can be reckoned as an unwilling observer—Guarmani, in 1864, comes early on the scene, for he was only preceded by Wallin and Palgrave. Thus his journey is of considerable chronological interest. For our knowledge of Northern Najd—the title of his work—we were at that date dependent upon Wallin's authoritative and Palgrave's imaginative descriptions. From the former we knew of the two approaches to Najd, the usual one from the north via Jauf and the Nafud, and another from the west via Tabuk and Taima. He also gave us, as Hogarth says, the best description of the Northern Amirate to date. From the latter we had the rather flowery account, largely conversational, of the same northern approach to Jabal Shammar, and of his passage onwards to Qasim. Then, two years later, followed Guarmani, neither highly specialised like the Swede, nor politically minded like the Jesuit, but just out for horse-flesh. He tells a simple tale, and, as will be seen, adds a great deal to the knowledge gathered by his forerunners.

Like Palgrave, he wisely travelled under an assumed name, and in native costume; he posed as a Turk, and professed Islam, making his *rikat* "to God in my Heart, but to Mahomet with my lips, in all due reverence"; in fact, like Wallin, he feigned the Faith to his own end.

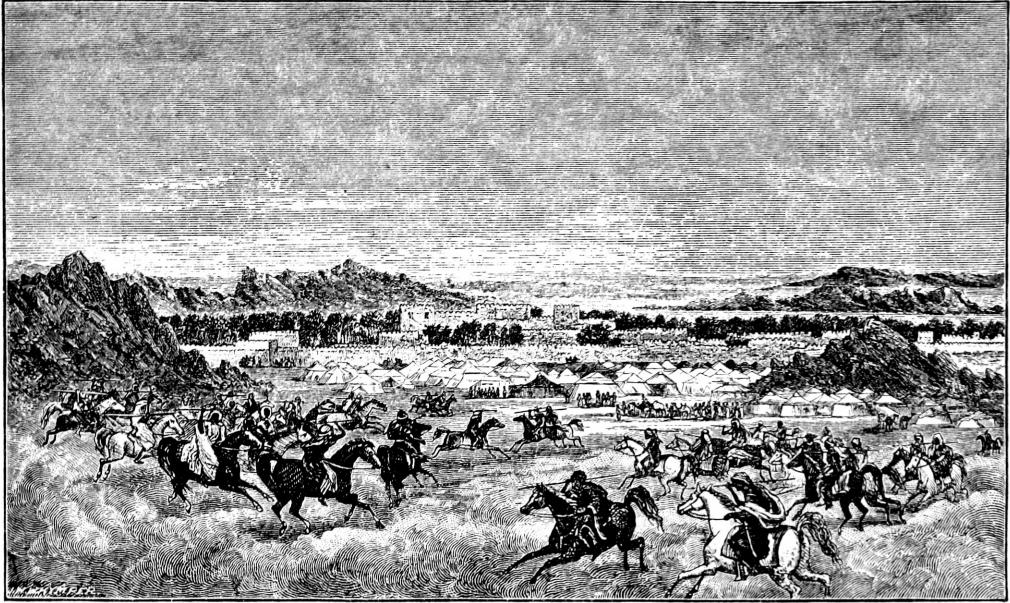
If Guarmani's main object of penetrating Najd was in quest of the "Arab" horse, as a horse-dealer he stands alone amongst the Arabian travellers of the nineteenth century, with the single exception of Wilfred Scawen Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt. This is remarkable, for there had always been an (erroneous) idea that Arabia was rich in horses of the best "Arab" type, and the demand for them had always been keen in other countries, yet only these of the many would-be dissemblers made use of this obvious subterfuge. Prospective buyers no doubt had their agents on the look out at the principal horse-markets, to which the Amirs sent their surplus, such as Kuweit, Damascus, Aleppo and Cairo, and did not attempt to buy direct.

There would appear to have been exceptional activity in the "Arab" horse trade during the early part of the nineteenth century. This may have been partly due to the fact that the then Khedive, Abbas Pasha I, was a wild enthusiast of the pure-bred "Arab", and was busy assembling at Cairo one of the best modern studs. Wallin mentioned the convoys of horses passing to Egypt from Najd, and even associated the closer relationship which secluded Jabal Shammar was opening up with Egypt with the

fancy that Abbas Pasha had developed for Shammar horses. The fact that the Pasha sent his own grooms annually to buy direct from Najd, instead of relying on the open markets, would, in itself, account for the superiority of his stud. For although the traffic in "Arabs" was considerable, very few of these came out of Arabia itself, and of these still fewer were good. It has been said that no first-class horse ever came out of Arabia, but this is an exaggerated way of saying "if you want the best, you must go and get him". Abbas Pasha went and got them, or rather sent his Georgian agent more than twenty times, backed by unlimited money, to scour Arabia and the Syrian Desert. But when we hear of him paying £3,000 for an aged Anaza mare, we are liable to feel suspicious, for there may have been another side to the Pasha's horse-cooping. As a young man he had accompanied his father on the Egyptian campaign against the Wahhabis, and this no doubt started, or developed in him, a passion for "Arab" steeds, besides giving him unique opportunities for acquiring what he desired, even if they came to him as spoils of war. But, in addition, his experience amongst the Arabians left an indelible impression on him, which in later life expanded into a set pro-Arab policy. It is hinted that his real ambition was to make alliance with the Arabs, and free himself from the Porte. So his horse-dealing may have served a double purpose, both that of gratifying his whim, and as a means of scattering much Egyptian gold amongst the Badawin and Wahhabis, whereby he hoped to purchase their allegiance.

The stable of the Egyptian Pasha, or perhaps the sale of it in 1860, at which the French and Italian Governments participated, may have inspired the Emperor Napoleon III and H.M. Victor Emanuel II to commission Guarmani to go and buy direct, not so much from the wandering Badawin, but from the studs of the reigning Amirs, "as they take infinite pains to preserve the Arab race in its original perfection". They may have done so in those spacious days, when they fought as much as they liked, and their wars demanded plenty of horses; Wallin put the Amir Abdulla's stud at Hail at about two hundred, and said that almost all the wealthier families of Jabal Shammar possessed a certain number of horses; but it is a very different story now.

The fortunes of war decided the fate of the best studs. In Palgrave's day, supremacy lay at Riyadh, therefore the best horses were to be found there. By the time Doughty arrived, power and horses were concentrated in the Jabal Shammar; he guessed the Amir's stud to number between two and three hundred, and states that the Amir was able to reimburse himself for heavy Government expenses to a very considerable amount by the



Ibn Rashid's Mares, in 1879
(*From A Pilgrimage to Nejd, by Lady Anne Blunt*)

yearly sale of horses to the Indian market. The Blunts, who looked very narrowly at the Hail stud, were *not* impressed. The truth is that the "Arab" in his own home is never numerous, and seldom good to look on; but his environment, and probably the climate, sustain a type of such strength, that, taken from his own country, he has proved himself to possess the most valuable of all blood for the regeneration of other breeds. The creation of the English thoroughbred, by the importation of a single stallion (the Darley Arabian), bought cheap near Aleppo, is an outstanding example.

Even the Blunts thought the original breed dwindling, and now, as the first result of a practical cessation of tribal warfare, the horse is rapidly disappearing. Another reason for the decline in breeding is that the demand has fallen off, owing to the removal of the restrictions on the height of polo ponies. Thirdly, the arrival of the motor car leaves horse-breeding as a pastime to be indulged in only by the Wahhabi Royal Family.

The political status of Inner Arabia at the time of Guarmani's journey was briefly this. The Wahhabis dominated Southern Najd, as well as semi-independent Qasim. Faisal Ibn Saud, the same blind old Amir who had entertained Palgrave two years before, was still alive, but now ruled through his three sons—Abdulla at Riyadh and Hasa, Saud in the southern provinces, and Muhammad in the northern districts. Further north in Jabal Shammar the Rashid dynasty was firmly established, being virtually independent of Wahhabi control, although of course nominally still a part of the Wahhabi dominion. Talal was the reigning Amir, who had ruled so strongly and so well, since 1847, that the Jabal had enjoyed an almost unique period of prosperity and peace. In fact Guarmani found travel within his dominions as safe as in Italy. Talal had steered a safe course through a long and stormy passage lasting seventeen years, and had yet another four years at the helm before his tragic death.

The moment therefore was propitious for Guarmani's visit: peace was fairly general, with the exception perhaps of the semi-independent city republic of Anaiza, which was restless as the result of recent Wahhabi aggression. Indeed it was a foray on the borders of Qasim, between the Wahhabi Amir Abdulla and Ataiba Badawin, which Guarmani chanced to run into and which nearly caused him disaster, that goes a long way to prove the veracity of the narrative of his journey from Khaibar onwards to Qasim. But, as Guarmani was quick enough to see, the star of the Saud dynasty was evidently setting, while that of the Rashid was as certainly in the ascendant. Within four years of Guarmani's visit, Talal was dead, and his throne seized through a welter of blood from a usurping nephew

by the great Muhammad. Indeed, the new Amir was destined to prove himself the greatest Arab of his time, and he certainly "had all Najd with him". He extended his dominions and consolidated his position in the north, until his rule ran from the Syrian Pilgrim route to the marches of Iraq, and from the frontiers of Qasim right up to the Hauran borderlands and even as far as Palmyra. He was, in fact, "undisputed arbiter of the whole of the northern desert". In due time, sixteen or seventeen years, his longed-for chance occurred, and he occupied his rival's capital—Riyadh—as conqueror, thus once more destroying Wahhabi hopes. The star of the Saud had certainly set; it would appear to have set for all time.

A few years later, even stubborn Qasim succumbed to the all-successful Muhammad, and the remnant of the House of Saud fled into exile. Amongst them was a boy, Abdul Aziz, eldest son of Abdul Rahman Ibn Faisal Ibn Saud. Why that boy was left alive, and not dealt with in the customary manner in order to stop all possible complications in the future, is a mystery. For the boy grew to manhood, and, within thirty-eight years of Guarmani's prophecy, had by one bold masterstroke won back his throne, resuscitated Wahhabism, and eventually attained what had never been before—the broken, parcelled Arabia of Guarmani's day had become a solid, ordered state under an enlightened Ruler.

The geographical interest attached to Guarmani's journey into Najd lies in the fact that he was our only authority to date for that wide region between the Pilgrim route to Mecca and the Syrian route to Middle Arabia, by way of the Wadi Sirhan, a region which was not visited again for forty years. He was only forestalled by two travellers, Wallin and Palgrave, at the oases of Hail and Jauf, and by Wallin alone at Taima, while he can claim priority over all Arabian travellers by visiting Khaibar, and also by journeying on thence to Anaiza and Buraida, which oasis he was the second European to enter. Moreover, he was the first to see and to describe the numerous outlying oases and pastoral settlements of the Shammar dominion towards the south-west. He made a better general map than did either Wallin or Palgrave, while his descriptions of these districts deserve praise from all who know Arabia.

Guarmani's itinerary can be divided into the following sections:

1. The well-described march from the Belqa of Transjordan to Taima by way of the Ardh as Suwwan, the Tubaiq highlands and Fajr.
2. The meagre record of his wanderings between Taima, Khaibar, Anaiza and Hail. In spite of its shortcomings this is in many ways the most intriguing part of his whole story.

3. The excellent description he gives us of Jabal Shammar and its outlying settlements, together with the details of his march thence to Taima and back again by the same route.

4. The return journey from Hail across the Nafud to Jauf, and thence down the Wadi Sirhan where his diaries regain some of their original fullness.

Guarmani's first stage was an interesting one. He passed from Palestine to Taima by none of the usual caravan routes, but steered a direct course across the barren waste between the Pilgrim route to Mecca, and the time-worn caravan track to Jauf. Although not much used, yet for travellers in haste between Damascus and Madina this was an acknowledged route in the days before the building of the Hijaz railway.¹ Of this stage of 350 miles he gives us a very detailed account, ending up with an excellent description of Taima, which is supplemented, but in no way disproved, by Doughty and Huber, and as I was able to see for myself on my visit to Taima in 1909.

The second stage to Khaibar and Qasim is more difficult to follow, for he only gives us a narrative of events; the itinerary, elsewhere so carefully kept, is here entirely lacking.

Once entangled in the feuds and intrigues of rival tribes, his difficulties became greater, his life endangered, and consequently his geographical notes became negligible. It must be remembered that for the first part of this stage, namely between Taima and Khaibar, Guarmani is our only witness; no western traveller had been there before him, while only Doughty has seen a portion of it since. The obvious criticism is that he never made the journey. But it must be remembered that the Khaibar trip was no more than it was intended to be—a venture, from which he might be turned back at any moment. He was after horse-flesh, and he conjectured rightly that the western marches of Jabal Shammar, where Bishr and Ataiba overlap, were the most likely places to find it. So he left his men and his money in Taima and rode off to the south, having little idea of what was in store for him.

¹ It is just possible that Varthema was on this route in part, for although the caravan with which he journeyed did not touch Taima, it did include Khaibar in its itinerary. Varthema makes no mention of the usual halts on the Syrian Pilgrim route such as Tabuk, Madain Salih, etc., places that he could not have failed to record; in fact, after leaving "the valley of Sodom and Gomorrah" where there were three ruined cities on the tops of three mountains (probably ruined sites east or south-east of the Dead Sea) he makes note of no stopping-place at all until he reaches Khaibar.

For three days his Alaida guide led him to the south-south-east. Guarmani mentions no landmarks between Taima and the Khaibar Harra. It is a wide and unfamiliar region, a good 10,000 square miles of unexplored territory, on which our information is practically nil. We know it as the *dīra* of the Fuqara, Aida, Bishr, Hutaim and Wuld Sulaiman. The truth is that it is a cul-de-sac, created by the impassable lava-fields, and all main routes avoid it. There has always been a track from Taima to Madina; there are the several routes between Taima and Jabal Shammar, and there is the way thence back to Khaibar, but the space in between these highways is vast and unknown. Into this void Guarmani apparently ventured in search of horses, and, although he does not prove himself, his account rings true. Doughty wandered along its northern marches, and again, later, penetrated it from the south-east, as far as the "desolate and thirsty mountains" Jabal Hajar, but between his tracks is a large blank space. Huber names it the *Sefa* or *Aseffah* desert, but it is not without water.

Three days' journey would take Guarmani into the district called *Yeteroha*, or *Litruha* (Yatruha), under the northern flank of the Harra, where there are plenty of wells. From this point it would be only a day's journey to Khaibar.

As it happened he failed to find his horses at the Alaida Shaikh's encampment, and passed on to the more likely grazing grounds of Jauf Wuld Sulaiman. Here he found stallions, although not good enough for his market, but the Wuld Sulaiman Shaikh was absent in Hail. So he retreated again to the Alaida, and finding their tents removed, rode direct for Khaibar—"eleven hours away".

Guarmani's description of Khaibar, the allusions to the difficult volcanic Harra and the feverish swamps, might have been culled from Doughty's *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, had they not been written thirteen years before Doughty's visit, and twenty-four years before the publication of his book. His references to the famous "Acropolis Rock", the Qasr al Yahudi, and the seven valleys of the Harra with their strange black inhabitants, are not very full, but are obviously from original observations. Where else could Guarmani have got his information? Considering that he was only two nights in the place the meagreness of his observations is not to be wondered at.

The Khaibar venture was left out of his itinerary, for the same reason that the Haiyaniya-Jubba excursion was not included. Both were of the type of side-trip or diversion from the main objective, such as many an explorer has undertaken and has afterwards found difficult to vindicate.

Yet Zehme doubted, and Doughty first of all disbelieved—though he later qualified his scepticism—that Guarmani saw Khaibar and Qasim.

Albert Zehme, in his review of Arabian exploration, does not come to any definite conclusion as to the doubtful portions of Guarmani's journey. "Whether Guarmani", he says, "actually visited Cheibar or only wrote from hearsay I am unable to state. His route from Teima to Schammar is that followed by Wallin, so that I am inclined to believe that he, like Wallin, did not visit Cheibar." Doughty, on the other hand, believed himself to be the first European in Khaibar. "I have never doubted", he wrote a quarter of a century later, "that Guarmani's Kheybar visit was imaginary. I am obliged to doubt also if he has seen Aneyza." Hogarth evidently tried to get at Doughty's real opinion of the matter, for he published the following letter in his *Life of Charles M. Doughty*:

Dear Mr Hogarth,

I may have been prejudiced by what Zehme says in his *Arabien seit 100 Jahren* which I had in Arabia, but what also weighed with me was my not seeing any connection between what Guarmani says of Khaybar and the place itself; and it is a remarkable place. So also of Aneyza, but in a less degree, when I read that in England about 1879, and when I have also an indistinct remembrance of looking at a slight map of Guarmani's and thinking there was nothing in it. On the other hand, though he has no doubt visited Teyma, I recollect thinking when I read Zehme then, that his account was unsatisfactory. His visit may have been a flying one and too short to leave much impression on his mind, nor is it likely he would see or hear much if he travelled with valuable horses much by night time, on account of the heat.

Then I ask myself was it at all likely that Guarmani should visit Khaybar the most unlikely, and as his rafiks would at once have told him, impossible place to go for horses; and how could he have passed over the astonishing Harra, without noticing it?¹

I have not thought of these matters since about 1879 and it is now some way back in memory. To do Guarmani justice I should have to read all he says critically which I have never had an opportunity of doing. I have not seen Zehme for perhaps as long and could hardly hope to find my copy now after many house flittings.

The young Italian whom I met at Hayil spoke disparagingly of Guarmani's book on horses (still unknown to me) and then of Guarmani himself; but why I know not, nor if he had any just and sufficient reason for doing so.

Since I received your letter, a week ago, I have thought again of Khaybar; and

¹ See pp. 29-30.

it has struck me, that during date harvest there would indeed, in Guarmani's time, have been the Weylad-Aly and Fukara tribes encamped at Khaybar, who have some few horses: so that if he was at that time in the country he might possibly have thought of following them there. With all this I was so long detained at Khaybar and heard there as it were, everything that was in the hearts of Amm Mohamed en-Nejmy and others that it appears to me very unlikely that, if any stranger had visited the place a few years before,¹ they would not have mentioned it. And yet if he went there at all, it is conceivable that he may have visited the Beduin tents and not entered the place.

You see I have little definite to go upon. My English impression of Italian work may be wrong but I should not expect an ordinary Italian of the sixties to be very exact in a statement of his wandering travels or perhaps to be quite above a slight *bugia*.

Yours very sincerely,

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY

"Thus it would appear", comments Hogarth, "that Doughty became less certain of his priority than Khalil had been. No other light has been, or perhaps ever can be, thrown on the question."

There is no doubt in my mind that Guarmani went to Khaibar. I can see no reason for Zehme's opinion to the contrary, except that Guarmani's survey notes are lacking over this stage, and consequently his map is so incomplete that Zehme had no check on his place-names, whereas we in the light of present-day knowledge can trace Guarmani's wanderings between Taima, Khaibar and Qasim with sufficient accuracy to dispel any doubt as to his honesty.

Leaving Khaibar, Guarmani evidently intended to pass onwards into Wahhabi Najd, for he rode direct for Qasim. On the way, however, he became embroiled in tribal warfare between Wahhabi and Ataiba factions. This put him off any further adventure in that direction. However, with an eye to the future—for he seriously hoped to be able to return on some future occasion—he attempted to visit the Amir Abdulla Ibn Saud in his war camp, which was in the neighbourhood of the village of Dath, some fifteen hours' march south-west of Anaiza. But he was refused audience, and was sent under escort to Anaiza. This pleased him, for he considered Anaiza the largest town in Najd, and its principal trade was in horses. After being honourably entertained by Zamil, as a proper Moslem and a Turkish official, he was forwarded to Hail. He went by the ordinary route as far as Faïd, that followed in fact by Palgrave in 1862,

¹ Actually thirteen years.

and by Huber in 1880, only in the reverse direction; then instead of going direct to the capital he journeyed round to Taba and Saban on either flank of Jabal Salma. Once under Talal's safe rule he wandered at will over a considerable area of the Jabal, and made his best contribution to geography. His itinerary returns to some of its earlier detail, but even here he was evidently preoccupied, doubtless with his horse-dealing. However, he gives a detailed account of his route between the Jabal and Taima, which seems to have been practically the same as Wallin's 1848 journey, but it is still closer to Huber's return track in March and April 1884. Doughty also touched at many of the places he mentions. Thus we have a check on his observations, and he is not found wanting. His best work was to give us a fairly accurate map of the Jabal, with the positions of twenty-two outlying settlements. "From him we first learn the large westward and south westward extent of the oases and wells on which the Shammar depend, and in reading his book we realise at once the basis of the power of Hail and its reality."¹ The positions of these places are, on the whole, fairly accurate, although there are some considerable differences between his estimated distances and Huber's. For instance, Muqaq is two and three-quarter hours from Jafaifa against Huber's five and a half hours—but this underestimate may be due to fast travelling on horse-back—while the position of Ghazala (Guarmani's *Gazal*) should be due west of Mustajidda (Guarmani's *Mestegeddeh*) instead of being placed as it is due north.

He was in the Jabal thirty-four days, during which period he made the journey to Taima, to fetch his men and his money, and thence returned by the same route, giving his itinerary in detail, before setting out on his return journey across the Nafud to Jauf and Palestine. Treated in this light Guarmani's wanderings between Taima, Khaibar, Qasim and Hail cannot seriously be discredited.

¹ D. G. Hogarth in *The Penetration of Arabia*.

THE JABAL SHAMMAR SETTLEMENTS
according to GUARMANI, and their identifications

SHAMMAR TOWNS AND VILLAGES

KAIL	HAIL
MOCAC	MUQAQ
LECHITE	LAQITA
GOBBAH	JUBBA
GOFEIFE	JAFAlFA
TUEIE, on map FUEIA	TWAIYA
GHENAA	QANA
EL-UGID	WAQID
EL-BEDAN	BEDAN
EKEDA	AQDA
EL-HENAKIA or HAIANIE	HAIYANIYA
LAZZAM, on map LEZRAM	LAZZAM; Huber records it as an outlying palm enclosure of Muqaq
USSETA	WUSEITA

BANI TAMIM TOWNS AND VILLAGES

GOFAR	QAFa; "Gofar, written Kafar, and in the mouth of the nomads Jiffar" (Doughty)
EL RODA	RAUDHA
SEBAN	SABAN
MESTEGEDDEH	MUSTAJIDDA
BAHCAA	BAQAA
EL KASSER	QASR (AL ASHRAWAT); "a village of 250 to 300 souls" (Doughty)
EL GAZAL	GHAZALA
EL SALEIME	SULAIMI
TABE	TABA

The only important omission from a present-day list of Jabal Shammar settlements is Samira of the Bani Tamim, on the extreme southern confines of the Amirate.

Its omission is curious, for although a little known settlement, it is of importance as being on the main Pilgrim route between Madina and Iraq; it also has a good water supply. Our only authorities for it are Ibn Battuta and Doughty. The former halted there in December 1326, and found it

“a patch of low-lying country on a plain, where there is a kind of fortified enceinte which is inhabited. It has plenty of water in wells, but brackish.” From Doughty we learn that it consisted of three fortified walled enclosures, covering less than two acres, and possibly containing one hundred houses. The town gate was so small that camels could not enter. It was palmless, but possessed good wheat and barley land. The water supply must have been unusually abundant, for it was chosen as a rendezvous for the tribes when they gathered to pay tax to Ibn Rashid. Samira was also renowned as being the first settlement of the Tayy on their arrival from the south.

One other small palm settlement, not mentioned by Guarmani, is Hafna, but it may not have existed then. Doughty also includes the remote villages of Hayat and Thurghrud, which lie under the eastern flank of the Khaibar Harra, and also Faid, which was under the dominion of Ibn Rashid in Palgrave's, and in his day.

On his return journey there are several points of interest. Guarmani was the first to make the journey to Qasr Haiyaniya (Guarmani's *Haianie*), an outpost of the Amir's on the north-eastern edge of the Nafud, and from there he went to Jubba, a stage which had not been followed before, nor has it been traversed since. There may be some scepticism as to this; evidently Kiepert disregarded it, for he left it off his map, and did not put in Haiyaniya at all, making Guarmani's route lead direct from Hail via Qana and Jubba. Yet the latter's description is honest enough, and there seems to be good reason for his rather round-about journey. He had been invited by the Amir Talal to accompany him to Haiyaniya, which was to be the rendezvous for a great *ghazzu*. His horses were awaiting him at Jubba, on the main trans-Nafud track, so he journeyed with the raiding party to Haiyaniya. From here he might have proceeded along the edge of the Nafud to Jauf, as Shakespear did, but instead, he cut back across the sands to join the rest of his party at Jubba. His description of Haiyaniya is true enough, but the speed with which he accomplished the journey is open to criticism. He must have ridden 182 miles in two stages. The first stage, from Laqita (Guarmani's *Lechite*) to Haiyaniya, was accomplished in fifteen hours, that is to say at the rate of five and a half miles per hour, a speed which would only be attained under the very exceptional circumstances in which he travelled, namely accompanying the Amir's *ghazzu*. We hear again of Haiyaniya, from Doughty, as a mobilising centre for Shammar raiding-parties.¹ The second stage, from Haiyaniya to Jubba, is about 100 miles across the sand-dunes of the Nafud, a fact which Guar-

¹ *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, p. 242.

mani does not fail to mention. He must therefore have travelled without stopping. He took sixteen hours, a remarkable achievement for a European, but not an unusual one for an Arab *dhulul*-rider. Compare this with any of the recorded feats of endurance accomplished by native riders, and the exploit seems credible; viz. 60 miles a day for 9 days in succession by the post-rider between Bagdad and Damascus; Burckhardt's story of the camel which did 115 miles in 11 hours; Leachman's record of a rider who rode the 600 miles between Najaf and Riyadh in 6 days, but the effort killed the *dhulul*! Nolde rode a camel which did 62½ miles between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. Lawrence covered 90 miles in 22 hours, and states that 80 miles a day is quite usual for raiding-parties.

From Jubba, Guarmani hurried northwards across the Nafud with his horses, by the track already described by Wallin and Palgrave, but took little notice of the phenomena of the great sand-bed. He gives a true picture of Jauf and its neighbourhood, and his map compares favourably with those of his successors. He mentions no less than ten settlements around Jauf, some of which we now know to be deserted.

From Jauf, Guarmani proceeded homewards by one of the many tracks along the Wadi Sirhan—the usual route taken by travellers between Najd and Syria. His return journey was not without adventure. After four months of travel in dangerous regions, he had his worst experience on his last lap. The caravan to which he had attached himself was attacked by a Ruwalla *ghazzu* in the Wadi Sirhan, and he had to run for his life, eventually reaching the village of Kaf with the loss of only one of his horses.

Although it was only, according to his reckoning, 29 hours across to his starting-place in the Belqa, he did not go direct to Jerusalem by that route. He appears to have gone to Damascus, and thence home by Tiberias, Nazareth, Jenin and Nablus. Doubtless his string of horses was the reason, for Damascus was the emporium of, and Beirut the usual outlet for, such traffic.

It is fair to say that Guarmani experienced the worst and the best of what Northern Arabia can offer in the way of scenery. He certainly saw the desert in its most repellent form on his outward journey to Taima, for all authorities agree that this Shararat wilderness is one of, if not *the* most arid and inhospitable of the whole peninsula. The rolling limestone downs of the Belqa quickly ran out into the black basaltic flats of the Ardh as Suwwan, which led on to the grotesque scenery of the eroded uplift called Tubaiq, a wide mountain area of about 300 square miles rising



GUARMANI'S ITINERARY IN NORTHERN ARABIA.

to 4000 feet in altitude. Beyond this lay a land of fretted, wind-worn sandstone, only to be succeeded by the Hul waste of which Lawrence wrote so vividly. It was called so "because it was desolate, and to-day we rode in it without seeing any sign of life. . . . There seemed no activity, animal or vegetable and we, ourselves, felt tiny in it, and our urgent progress all day across its immensity a stillness and immobility of futile effort. The only sounds were the hollow echoes, like the shutting down of pavements over vaulted places, of rotten stone slab on stone slab, when they tilted under our camels' feet, and the slow, but piercing, rustle of the sand, as it crept slowly westwards before the hot wind of the open desert—along the sides of the worn sandstone under the overhanging caps of harder layer which gave each ridge its shape."

At length the rich and ancient oasis of Taima was reached, lying like an emerald island in a sterile desert sea.

In the ordinary course of events Guarmani would have watered at a line of wells which exists (at long intervals) between his starting-point in the Belqa and Taima—Bayir, Hausa, Mughaira and Fajr—but owing to a phenomenally wet season there was surface water everywhere, so he avoided the wells, and secured greater safety.

Beyond Taima Guarmani again entered a wilderness which is remarkable for its lack of drainage—few wadis seam it—and for its lack of physical features—few landmarks stand to guide the traveller—but it led him in three days to a vast lava-bed, of which he experienced enough to make him avoid it as much as possible on leaving Khaibar (see pp. 29–30).

Between here and Qasim there was not much to record, excepting the mountains of Alam, an isolated group of rugged granite hills of which we know little (see p. 30). The best country he saw was, of course, situated in the Jabal Shammar, where the scenery is as varied as it is monotonous elsewhere, for it is Highland Najd, a district of imposing crags, prosperous oases, good grazings, and, for Arabia, well populated. The Jabal attains an altitude of 5500 feet. In contrast to this his homeward journey forced him to make the crossing of the Nafud, a two-hundred-mile journey, by the shortest route, over the storm-tossed dunes and wind-scoured pits of the great sand-bed.

Although a more or less complete translation of Guarmani's *Northern Najd* appeared the following year in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, it has not been translated into any other language; but it has, of course, come in for a certain amount of appreciation and criticism. All writers on Arabia have had need to mention him; some to discuss him fully, and

many to cast doubts on the veracity and the extent of his travels. These critics range from the contemporary Prussian Consul at Jerusalem, Heinrich G. Rosen, to J. G. Wetzstein, Albert Zehme, C. M. Doughty and D. G. Hogarth. All these scholarly résumés, it must be admitted, are out of date, whereas we, in the light of the present-day knowledge, are enabled to approach Guarmani's book with a better understanding. But, let it be noted at once, that for certain sections, namely those on which aspersions have been cast, we are not in a much better position to-day than were the critics of the past, for no one has been there since Guarmani—seventy years ago—a long period of ignorance, when we consider the advance Arabia has made into the political and commercial limelight during recent years. To take these authorities in their proper order, Cav. Dr H. G. Rosen, then Consular Agent for the King of Prussia at Jerusalem and a contemporary of Guarmani's, wrote a précis of his journey for the Berlin *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde*, vol. xviii, 1865, p. 201. After complimenting him upon the amount of data he brought back with him, he says his diary is rather a guide-book for future travellers than a record of his own journey. He regrets his failure to introduce personal adventures "whereby it would have been possible to distinguish what he actually saw and experienced from that which he merely asked about and heard of". Rosen accepts Guarmani's description of Khaibar, but omits all reference to his route thither. Neither does Rosen refer to Guarmani's wanderings between Khaibar, Anaiza and Jabal Shammar. Yet it is easy to see from his narrative that his "personal adventures" on this stage were such as to exclude all opportunity of topographical study and were the very reason for the break in his route-survey.

Wetzstein, in his review of the topography of "North Arabia and the Syrian Desert",¹ refers to the value of Guarmani's itineraries between the Dead Sea and the Shammar mountains, and points out that he described regions which were then mostly unknown. His criticism is, however, founded chiefly on Rosen's short précis; and even he, with his unrivalled knowledge of Arabian geography, is apparently unable to decide whether Guarmani went farther afield than Taima and Jabal Shammar. He says in one place that "from his information about Kasim, one can easily see that he was also in that region", but goes on to qualify this statement by adding: "It is only to be regretted that he does not give his itinerary there, as without knowing this, one cannot tell whether his data are founded on personal experience or on information supplied him by others." Still Wetzstein considers Guarmani's accounts much more trustworthy than Palgrave's.

¹ *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde*, vol. xviii, 1865, p. 408.

Zehme's criticisms have already been referred to in relation to the Khaibar visit, but he, like Wetzstein, is confused by Guarmani's account and does not actually come to any real conclusion as to the doubtful portions of his journey. After questioning the veracity of Guarmani's visit to Khaibar, he says that his geographical description of Jabal Shammar "does not differ as a whole from that which we know from Wallin and Palgrave". As a matter of fact, Guarmani's map of the Jabal is far in advance of Palgrave's and compares very favourably with Wallin's. Palgrave locates ten settlements, Guarmani places twenty. Guarmani also corrects the grossly exaggerated range of Jabal Aja as drawn on Palgrave's map, a point, by the way, not appreciated by Kiepert. Wallin gave us a very fair idea of the Shammar villages, locating as many as twenty-two, chiefly from native information; Guarmani actually visited many of these, and adjusted them to their approximate positions.

Zehme, in truth, discredited Guarmani's visit to Khaibar and Qasim. Kiepert followed suit by leaving out that particular section of his journey, when compiling the map to accompany Rosen's précis. This was probably due to Kiepert's lack of sufficient detail about the region in question.

Doughty's only reference to Guarmani has already been noted, but Hogarth, writing before his posthumous work *The Life of Charles M. Doughty*, gave Guarmani high praise. In his *Penetration of Arabia* he establishes Guarmani's place in the history of the exploration of the peninsula:

Two other Europeans had come to Jabal Shammar by other roads before any of those whose course we have already traced, except Wallin and Palgrave. Of this pair one is to be rated first among adventurers in Arabia, by reason of the daring of his feat, the quality of his observation, and the pregnant fidelity of his narrative; but the earlier and less remarkable has left a name worthy of high honour. His journey followed closely on Palgrave's and was undoubtedly to some extent, an outcome of it, though the traveller himself seems to have known little or nothing of his predecessor.

What impression in regard to other matters Palgrave made on his imperial patron is uncertain; but at any rate, his report on the Nejdean horse, fanciful though it was, led to immediate action. In September 1863, a Levantine Italian, Carlo Guarmani, then or formerly Consular Agent for the King of Prussia at Jerusalem, and known, since his expedition to Jaufr in 1851, to be able and willing to assume disguise in Arab lands, received a summons to Paris. This was followed by a further mandate to Turin, and, in the event he returned to Jerusalem, intrusted with a mission to buy stallions in Nejd for their French and Sardinian majesties.

The envoy set out in January, 1864, consoled, he says, amid the tears and dismal

prognostications of his family, by the glorious hope of inscribing his name on the roll of explorers. Thanks to intimate relations with the Anaze Badawins, and especially the Roala Chief, he was passed quickly through the territories of the Beni Sokhr and Sherarat, and without incident reached Teima on February 11th, by a line of wells sunk on the skirts of the Nafud to east of the Syrian Pilgrim road. As soon as he parted from the Badawins, to whom he was known, Guarmani thought fit to style himself Khalil Agha, and pose as a Moslem and Master of the Horse to Fuad Pasha, Governor of Damascus. Unwelcome though a Turk might be in Nejd, the Italian held (probably on Palgrave's advice) that in his character he would arouse less suspicion than if he avowed himself a European.

Guarmani proved successful in the quest of horses, but not so in avoiding the imputation of a wider and more important commission. Ranging the steppe and the basalt Harrah, south of Teima (which oasis seemed to him more populous and important than to Wallin), he found himself, the first European, in the ancient and famous oasis of Kheibar, so entirely inhabited by blacks as to seem a bit of the Sudan. It was at that time held for the Shammar Emir by an Abyssinian governor who received Guarmani well; but the latter made only a short stay, finding no horses, and passed on in the company of two Hetaim tribesmen to the Ateiba country. All this part of Arabia, a calcareous steppe, affords good pasture, and is full of Badawins, against whom at that moment 'Abd-Allah who, as we shall see, had been Palgrave's foe in Riad, was waging war from his base in conquered Aneiza. To Kasim, in the hopes of reaching southern Nejd, Guarmani now took his way, but was soon in trouble. 'Abd-Allah would have none of the "Turkish spy" in his camp, and sent him, a prisoner, to Aneiza, where, however, the local Emir, Zamil, then a young man, but destined to great fame in Arabia, was not unwilling to help one whom he suspected to be contrary to 'Abd-Allah's interests. Accordingly he sent the "Turk", at his own request, to Jabal Shammar.

During the six weeks that followed, Guarmani did his best work for science. The Emir, Talal, was gracious to the late prisoner of his suzerain, and cared little were he Turk or no, so he bought horses. The "Agha" had free range of all his territory, went in and out of Hail, even to Teima and back again, and visited the mountain stronghold of "Eked" and nearly all the main oases of the Jabal ere he could depart, with his tale of stallions complete, across the Nafud, by the route of Wallin and Palgrave. The itineraries, therefore, which form the second part of the book issued for Guarmani by the Franciscans in Jerusalem, and the route maps appended thereto, constituted a most valuable supplement to Wallin's and Palgrave's accounts of Jabal Shammar. For while these explorers saw little but the capital and the townsfolk, Guarmani saw also the villages and the Badawins. From him we first learn the large westward and southwestward extent of the oases and wells on which the Shammar depend; and in reading his book we realize at once the basis of the power of Hail and its reality. The Italian seems to have found

travelling over the wide steppes safer than in his fatherland. He could leave his purchases to graze at a hundred miles distance, with a single attendant, and find them on his return, or send for them to meet him at Hail.

Guarmani does not allude to Palgrave, probably in deference to his superior Order, but (doubtless unwittingly) he corrects him on many points; for instance, the population of the capital and principal villages, the quality of the market in Hail, the appearance of Talal, and the age of his son. The Emir he found to be a short, stout man of forty, brown of skin, black and quick of eye, with a true Semite's nose. The only predecessor whom Guarmani mentions is an unfortunate Persian Jew who, feigning Islam, had come out of Syria shortly before to buy horses for the Shah, but was unmasked and massacred by the mob. The news of his death, spreading to Jerusalem, was supposed to refer to Guarmani's; but it did not disturb the stout "Turk" in Hail.

"In the best of health and appetite I ate my rice and regularly made my rikats to God with my heart, but with my lips to Mahomet in all due reverence; and recalling the Sermon on the Mount of Beatitudes, not to mention the stench of that rotting Israelite corpse, I resolved not to be included among the poor in spirit and pass into Paradise with the fools."

And in the end he got away safe enough, crossed the Nafud with his string of horses, bade adieu to Talal in Jauf, and encountered his worst hap when well within the borders of Syria, for he had to run from a *razzia* of Roala in the Wady Sirhan.

The sobriety of his descriptions, and his evident familiarity with all things Arab, inspire the reader with great confidence in Guarmani, and support his evidence against that of others; as, for example, when he testifies that there was no pronounced Wahabism in Jabal Shammar in his day, though a strong natural hostility to materialism. Long a student of Arab nomads, he shows a knowledge of Badawin tribes and sub-tribes almost on a par with Doughty's. His frequent passages through northern Nejd gave him a better idea of its orography than either of his predecessors possessed; and, being provided with a good compass, he was able to take the direction of the various ranges with sufficient precision for rough charts to be made afterwards. Indeed Guarmani gives us so many compass-bearings and precise intervals in Jabal Shammar that he can claim the distinction not only of being the first to render scientific cartography of Central Arabia possible, but of having done more for the map-makers than any of his successors except Huber.

As regards the map published with his book, it is sufficient to note that in no important essential has it been shown to be inaccurate, as must have been the case had he allowed his imagination to get the better of him. The most curious feature of it is the obvious exaggeration of the water supply. There are wadis which, according to the text, were by no means

dry, but contained running streams; there are rain-pools many thousands of square metres in area; but the spring of 1864 may have been an exceptionally wet season, for Guarmani mentions heavy rain in the Belqa, and four days of continuous slight rain, whilst on the ride to Taima, also continual torrential rain in the Nafud for 36 hours and rain again at Jauf—and this as late as the month of May.

The hill-shading is also quite out of proportion. For instance, no one would guess from the map that *Tobeit* (Tubaiq) is a mountain chain as compared with the rest of the region traversed; nor is Jabal Aja given its proportionate value as a mountain ridge 1000 feet above the surrounding deserts, with a maximum elevation of 5500 feet above sea-level.

This map should be studied in conjunction with the following, which show the region traversed by Guarmani, and which in some cases contain the whole, or a part, of his route. These have also been used in locating the place-names mentioned in the text.

Map of Arabia, compiled by John Walker for the East India Company, 1849.

Map of countries situated between the Rivers Nile and Indus, compiled by J. and C. Walker, 1850, for Chesney's *Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*.

Arabien, compiled by H. Kiepert, 1852, for Ritter's *Erdkunde* (Buch III), *West-Asien*, Theil XII, XIII.

Central Arabien, compiled by Kiepert. Illustrating Palgrave's, Guarmani's and Wallin's journeys. *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde*, 1865, Neue Folge, vol. XIX, Taf. I.

Guarmani's Reise nach dem nördlichen Central Arabien, compiled by H. Kiepert to illustrate Rosen's précis of Guarmani's journey. *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde*, 1865, Neue Folge, vol. XVIII, Taf. III.

W. S. and A. Blunt's *Reisen in Nord-Arabien*, showing also the routes of Guarmani, Wallin, Sadlier, Doughty and Said Pasha, to date. Petermann's *Mittheilungen*, vol. XXVII, 1881, Taf. XI.

North-western Arabia and Negd, by C. M. Doughty. *Proceedings of Royal Geographical Society*, vol. VI, New Series, 1884. Inset shows the first stage of Guarmani's route from the Belqa to Wadi Anab.

Itinéraires dans l'Arabie Septentrionale, by Charles Huber. *Bull. Soc. de Géog.* 1884, VII^{me} Série, vol. V, p. 304.

Maps attached to Huber's *Journal d'un Voyage en Arabie*, 1883-4.

A copy of Guarmani's map appeared, with a translation of his travels, in the *Bull. Soc. de Géog.* 1865, V^{me} Série, vol. IX.

Carte Internationale du Monde au 1,000,000. Sheets—Jauf, Medina, Riyadh.

I have preserved Guarmani's original spelling of proper names. His system of transliteration is curious, and not always consistent; the following should be noted:

C may be K or Q; CASSIM=QASIM; SCACA=SAKAKA

G may be J, GH or Q; GEBEL=JABAL; GAZAL=GHAZALA; GALEITE=QULEITA
GH is Q; GHENAA=QANA

K may be H or Q; KAIL=HAIL; AKEILE=AQALA

O may be U, AU, or W; MOCAC=MUQAQ; RODA=RAUDHA; TUEIE=TWAIYA

SC is SH; SCEIK=SHAIKH

U is W; UEDI=WADI

Guarmani's estimates of populations must be taken as greatly exaggerated. The nomadic tribes are difficult to estimate at all times, but the settlements have been carefully reported upon by various subsequent travellers, and their figures go to prove that Guarmani's are in most cases too high. The following examples show roughly the corrections which should be applied to all his reckonings:

HAIL	7,500	actually	about	4,000
KHAIBAR	2,500	„	„	1,000
TAIMA	1,000	„	„	2,000
KAF	250	„	„	90
JAUF	6,000	„	„	420 (houses)
ANAIZA	15,000	„	„	10,000
MUQAQ	2,000	„	„	100 houses at most, in Doughty's day— “hardly 150 souls”

JABAL SHAMMAR sedentary and nomadic, 75,000—at the most 40,000. Doughty estimated it at 20,000 settled folk, possibly 30,000 including nomads

Some of Guarmani's compass-bearings as recorded in the Itinerary are difficult to understand, for example, “25 m. south $\frac{1}{2}$ south-south-east”. It is doubtful whether this means a journey of 25 minutes in a direction $\frac{1}{2}$ *point* from south towards south-south-east, *i.e.* in our modern terminology, south-by-east $\frac{1}{2}$ south, or in a direction half the *distance* between south and south-south-east, *i.e.* south-by-east. The fact that Guarmani names only such bearings as east, east-south-east, south-east, south-south-east, south, and never east-by-south, south-east-by-east, south-east-by-south, south-by-east, suggests that he used a compass with the quadrants divided into only four named bearings, two points apart, and that his fractions show the

distance from one towards another of these bearings. If this be so, the second suggested alternative would be the correct rendering. Similarly, the bearing (p. 72) "south-east $\frac{1}{3}$ south-south-east" would mean a direction one-third of the distance from south-east towards south-south-east, *i.e.* one-third of two points. This cannot be rendered exactly in our terminology but it would mean a bearing lying between south-east $\frac{1}{2}$ south and south-east $\frac{3}{4}$ south.

PRINCIPAL PLACE-NAMES AND IDENTITIES MENTIONED BY GUARMANI

The spellings in the text and on the map attached to "Il Neged" do not always agree; both are given.

AAL, EL	QASR AL
AANAB, UEDI EL	WADI ANAB
AARED	ARIDH
ADEIMAT, BIR EL	BIR AL ADHAIMAT
AGHELAT EL GEMELEN	AJIDAT JAMALAIN
AIUN, EL	AYUN
AKDEIA, EL	AQDA
AKEILE	AQALA. A castle, probably the same as the present-day Qasr Shaibam
AKEREB, EM EL	UMM AL AKARIB
ALEIM	ALAIM
ALIA, UEDI	WADI ALYA
AKIAL, SEHEL	SAHL QIYAL, south-west of Khan Zabib
ANEIZAH	ANAIZA
ARAK ARABI	IRAQ
ARD EL SUAN	ARDH AS SUWWAN
ARNEN, GEBAL	JABAL IRNAN, ARNAN
ATIER	TUWAIR
AUGEH	AUJA
AYNN GOFEAH	AIN QEFIA
BAHCAA	BAQAA
BAHIRAT, EL	An unidentified site near Jauf
BASSORA	BASRA
BEDAN, BEDIE	BEDAN or BIDDIYA
BEDE, AIN EL	AIN AL BAIDHA
BEGHEIA MTS.	BUKEIA
BELKA	BELQA
BENI, EL	BANIYA
BERD, EL	JABAL BURD
BERKA	See note, p. 80
BET TAMAR	BEIT TAMAR
BOSTRA	BOSRA (ESKI SHAM)
BREDA, BEREIDA	BURaida
BUEIR, EL	See note, p. 31

CASSIM	QASIM
DAARE, GEBEL EL	JABAL ADHARA
DAT	DATH
DEBEDE	
DERBI, UEDI EL	See note, p. 103
DEREGEH, UEDI EL	WADI DARAJA (DERAJEH)
DERREIEH	DARAIYA
DOUASIR	DAWASIR
DRAAF, EL	JABAL DRAF
DUMA EL GENDALIE	DAUMAT AL JANDAL of Moslem geographers; Ptolemy's DUMAETHA
EBRON	HEBRON
EKDER, EL	See p. 106
EKEDE	AQDA
ENKA, GEBEL	See note, p. 84
ETERA	ITHRA
FED	FAID
FEGER	FAJR
FELUH, EL	AL FALQ, pl. FULUQ
FIHE, EL	AL FIHA
FRANK MTS.	JABAL FUREIDAS, FURDOS
GALEITE, EL	AL QULEITA
GARA	QARA
GARE, UEDI EL	See note, p. 76
GAZAL, EL	GHAZALA
GEHAR, UEDI	WADI JIHAR
GEIR, AIN EL	AIN AL JEHEIYIR
GENIN	JENIN
GERAUI, GERAUN	JARAWI. A Jauf settlement now deserted
GERAUI, BIR EL	BIR AL JARAWI. Well in the Wadi Sirhan
GEZIRE	JEZIRA
GHAFAH	KAHAFA
GHEBAAL, GHEBAL, EL	See note, p. 85
GHENAA	QANA
GIAWA	JAWA
GIOF AMER	JAUF AL AMIR. See note, p. 102
GIOF ULD SULEIMAN	See note, p. 86
GOBBAH	JUBBA
GOFAR	QAFA. GOFAR, Doughty; QUFAR, Philby

GOFEAH, AIUN	AIN QEFIA
GOFEIFE	JAFIFA
GOR	GHOR. Jordan depression
GOTTI, EL	AL GHATTI. A Jauf settlement
GOTTI, EL	AL QATTI. A Kaf village
GOUEIR MANNAA, UEDI	WADI GHUWEIR
GOVUEIR	WADI GHUWEIR. North-east end of Dead Sea
GUARA	QUWARA
GUTE	AL GHUTA
HAIANIE	HAIYANIYA
HAMAMIE, GEBEL	JABAL HAMMAMIYA
HARIK	HARIQ
HARRE, GEBEL	JABAL HARRA, applied to the KHAIBAR LAVAS
HASIA, EL	AL HASWA
HASSA, EL	AL HASA
HAULAT, EL	AL KHULA. Wallin, ALKHAWLA; Huber, KHOLEH, see note, p. 83
HEDGIAZ	HIJAZ
HENAKIE, EL	HANAKIYA
IMARIE, GEBEL	JABAL AMMARIYA. See note, p. 94
ISAK	IRAQ
KADEMA	KHADHMA. Quarter of Jauf
KAF	KAF
KAIL	HAIL
KAMARA, UEDI	WADI HAMARA
KAMMAD	HAMAD
KASSER, EL	QASR AL ASHRAWAT
KEIBAR	KHAIBAR
KELUAN, GEBEL	JABAL HELWAN
KENU, EL	AL HENU
KERAK	KARAK
KSEBA	QUSAIBA
KURA	AL KURA
LAZZAM, LEZRAM	LAZZAM. See note, p. 48
LEB	LIBB
LECHITE	LAQITA
LELA	LAILA
MAGAL, GEBEL EL	JABAL MAQQAL
MAGAR, UEDI EL	WADI MAGHARA. See note, p. 70

MARSABA	MAR SABA
MEDINA	MADINA
MEHEDER, BIR EL	BIR MUKHAIDIR
MELAH, BIR EL	BIR MLEH
MENSCALA	AIN AL MENSHALA
MERD, KALAAT EL	QALAAT AL MIRD
MESCASCE, EL	AL IMSHASH OR MISHASH
MESKEB	MISQA. See note, p. 31
MESMA, GEBEL	JABAL MISMA. Between Hail and Taima
MESMA EL SERHANI	JABAL MISMA of the Sirhan
MESTEGEDDEH	MUSTAJIDDA
METELAH, BIR	BIR MATALA
MOCAC	MUQAQ
MOGEB, UEDI	WADI MOJIB
MOHGEAN, EL	AL MUJIYAN
MUEISARI, BIR EL	BIR AL MAISARI
MUEISEN, EL	AL MUWAISHIR
MUSSA, UEDI	WADI MUSA
NAR	WADI NAHR. The Brook Kidron
NEBAIH, EL	NBAJ
NEBSCE	NABS, OR NABK ABU QASR
NEFUT	NAFUD
NEGED	NAJD
NEIEL, UEDI EL	WADI NAYYAL
NEPLUSA	NABLUS
ORRUMAN	ORMAN
ORTAS, UEDI	WADI URTAS
QUEIT	KUWAIT
RAM	RAMMA
RAZ	RASS
RODA	RAUDHA
RUMEL	RUMEIL
RUSAS, EM EL	UMM RASAS
SAIDE, UEDI	WADI SAIDE. An affluent of the Mojib
SAIDI, SAID	QASR SAIDI
SALEIME	SULAIMI. Doughty, SELEYMA OR SOLEYMA
SALEH, UEDI	WADI SALIYA
SALT	SALT

SAR, UEDI	WADI SIRR. See note, p. 41
SARRIEH	DHARIYA. Doughty, THERRIEH; see note, p. 31
SBEHA	SUBAIHA
SCACA	SAKAKA
SCEBA	SHAIBA
SCEBA, BIR EL	BIR SEBA
SCEGAR, BIR EL	BIR SHEGHAR, OR SHURAR
SCEGIK	SHAQIQ
SCEMA	?
SCERCIUK, SCERCIUH, ABU	A small upper right affluent of the Wadi Mughara or Hafira; not known by this name, which is probably the equivalent of SHARYUK or SHAR-SIUK
SCIAMMAR, GEBEL	JABAL SHAMMAR
SCIUMMERI, UEDI	WADI SHUMARI
SEBAN	SABAN
SEHEL AKIAL	SAHL QIYAL
SEHEL BENI HELAL	SAHL BANI HILAL
SEHEL EL SAALUH	See note, p. 78
SELIA	SALIYA
SELMA, GEBEL	JABAL SALMA
SELMA, UEDI	See note, p. 48
SENMAN, EM	UMM SALMAN
SETBE, EM	UMM MESEITBE
SIRHAN, UEDI	WADI SIRHAN
SMEHA	SAMAIHAH. See note, p. 97
SUACA, UEDI	WADI SUWAQA. Local name for the section of the Wadi Hallufa under JABAL SUWAQA
SUARKIE	SUWAIKRIYAH
SUDEIR	SUDAIR
SUK EL SCIUK	SUQ ASH SHUYUKH
TABE	TABA
TAEIE, GEBEL EL	JABAL AT TAYYE. See note, p. 30
TAFILE	TAFILA
TEBUK	TABUK
TEIME	TAIMA
TEMED, UEDI EL	WADI THAMAD
TERIFIAN; FERIFIAN, BIR ABU	ABU TARFIAN
TIBERIADE	TIBERIAS
TOBEIT, EL	TUBAIQ

TOBEIT, RAZ EL
TUEIE, FUEIA

RAS TUBAIQ
TWAIIYA

UESCEM
UESET, BIR
UGID
UREIK, EL
USCEVUASCE
USDUM, GEBEL
USSETA

WASHM
BIR WAISIT
WAQID
AL WARIQ
WASHWASH
JABAL USDUM
WUSEITA

ZERKA MAIN
ZERKAUEIN

WADI ZERQA MAAIN
Dual form of ZERKA

GLOSSARY OF GUARMANI'S ARABIC WORDS

AAKAL, cord that holds headkerchief

in place

ABAH, woollen cloak

ASIL, lineage

ASSER, afternoon or Third Prayer

CASSIDE, poem

DERA, shirt of mail

DIRA, tribal area

GAZZU, foray, raid

KANGIAR, Kangavar

KATIB, scribe

KEIFFIEH, headkerchief

KESSUE, outfit of clothes

KIBLAK (Turkish), south

KOHEL, antimony

LEBEN, buttermilk

MIHRAB, Niche pointing towards the
Kaaba at Mecca

MOGHREB, sunset prayer

MOHGIAN, camel-stick

PARA, small Turkish coin

PILAFF (Turkish), dish of rice and meat

RABABA, one-stringed violin

RAFIK, road-companion

REDGEM, cairn

RIKAT, obeisance, submission

SALEM ALEIKEM, peace be with you

SCIAMBA, veil

SENIE, tray

TEMMEN, clarified butter

ZAGARIL, shrill cry of welcome or grief

PRINCIPAL TRIBAL NAMES

ADUAN	equals ADWAN
ALEIDAN	ALAIDA, AIDA (section of Wuld Ali)
ANASI	ANAZA
BENI ATIE	BANI ATIYA
BENI HAMIDE	BANI HAMID, a Sukhur clan
BENI HARB	BANI HARB
BENI KATAN	BANI QAHTAN
BENI SAKUR, pl. SKUR	BANI SAKHR, pl. SUKHUR
BENI TAI	BANI TAYY
BENI TEMIM	BANI TAMIM
BISCIR	BISHR
DAFIR	DHAFIR
DAGHERET	DEGHAIKAT (SHAMMAR)
EHTEBE	ATAIBA
EHTEIM	HUTAIM
HAUEITAT	HUWAITAT
HIMAIAR	HIMYAR
KAABNEH	KAABNA (division of the Sukhur)
MASCEHUR	BANI MASHHUR
METEIR	MUTAIR
RUOLA	RUWALLA
SALEIB	SLEYB
SCERARAT, SCERARIE	SHARARAT, SHARARI
SCIAMMAR	SHAMMAR
SINGHIAR	SINJARA (SHAMMAR)
TAAMRI	TAMERE
TIAHA	TIYAHA
TUHA	TAUKA (BANI SAKHR)
ULD SULEIMAN	WULD SULAIMAN
WEYLAD ALI	WULD ALI

ITINERARY

JERUSALEM	Departed 26th January, 1864
QULEITA, SUKHUR encampment at sources of the Wadi Hallufa	Arrived 1st February, departed 3rd
TAIMA	Arrived 11th February, departed 13th
To Shaikh REDGIA'S ALAIDA encampment on Northern edge of KHAIBAR HARRA	14th, 15th, 16th
At ditto	
To JAUF WULD SULAIMAN	17th, 18th, 19th
At ditto	
and return to KHAIBAR HARRA	19th to 28th
KHAIBAR	Arrived 29th February, departed 1st-2nd March
JABAL TAYYE	5th, 6th, 7th
ANAIZA	22nd
BURAI DA	23rd
QUWARA	24th, 25th
FAID	26th
TABA	26th
SABAN	31st
HAIL	Arrived 1st April, departed 4th- 5th
GHAZALA	5th
MUSTAJIDDA	6th
RAUDHA	7th
SULAIMI	8th
QASR (AL ASHRAWAT)	9th, 10th
MUQAQ	10th
J AFAIFA	11th
BEDAN	Arrived 11th April, departed 12th
To TAIMA and return to Bedan	Between 12th and 24th
BEDAN, on return from Taima	24th
TWAIYA	26th
MUQAQ	26th
QAFA	27th
HAIL	28th
AQDA	30th

HAIL	Departed 4th May
HAIYANIYA	Arrived 5th May, departed 6th
JUBBA	Arrived 7th May, departed 9th
JAUF	Arrived 13th May, departed 16th
KAF Barely escaping with his life and his horses from a <i>ghazzu</i> in the Wadi Sirhan, he does not note the date he reaches Kaf, but the caravan with which he was travelling reached the neighbouring oasis of Ithra on the 22nd	

Later in the same year, in November, Cav. Dr H. G. Rosen wrote a précis from Guarmani's own manuscript, which appeared in the *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde* in 1865. In 1866, Guarmani's book was published in Jerusalem, being printed at the Press of the Franciscan Fathers, which Fraternity, by the way, can shed no further light on the author or his subject. In 1865, a more or less full translation of this book appeared in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*.

IL NEGED SETTENTRIONALE

ITINERARIO DA GERUSALEMME A ANEIZEH

NEL CASSIM

DI

CARLO GUARMANI

DI LIVORNO

GERUSALEMME

TIPOGRAFIA DEI PP. FRANCESCANI

1866.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
MONSIEUR ARMAND BEHIC
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE AND
PUBLIC WORKS IN FRANCE

This Work is humbly Dedicated by
THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, called by its inhabitants Geziret el-Arab, must be considered an almost entirely unknown land, like Africa nearby, with which it shares similar conditions of climate and soil. Flat, sandy deserts, mountains and rocks, scarcity of water and poor vegetation, burning heat in summer, tempestuous cold in winter, and insignificant products. Not possessing commerce, industries, art or antiquities, there seems no probability of any great historical discoveries, nor the chance of unravelling problems of a geographical nature, which might be profitable to human progress, such as, for instance, the discovery of the source of some important river. Therefore, it is not surprising if few have as yet been found "to bring (as the saying goes) their skin to the market every day", to explore such a country. The would-be traveller must have personal qualities especially adapted to cope with the difficulties of penetrating into the centre of this unknown land; he must have a constitution of iron to resist the cold, the heat, the bad food and worse water, the hunger, thirst, sleeplessness, and the fatigue of the long, uninterrupted camel-marches which often mean more hours than the length of an entire day. Besides this, he must be conversant with the language, habits and customs of the natives, so as to be able to wander amongst the nomad tribes of the desert as if he were their son, and such knowledge can only be acquired after many years of life with the Arabs. While, therefore, it is not surprising that this country is little known, yet it may be hoped that its mysteries will be solved in the near future.¹

CAV. DR H. G. ROSEN,
*H.M. the King of Prussia's Consul
in Palestine*

¹ "Guarmani's Travels in the Neged"; *Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde*, Neue Folge, vol. xviii, p. 201.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

WITHOUT this Itinerary, "*El Kamsa*"¹ would be an incomplete work, for I could not write on the Arab horse and its noble race without describing, in some manner, the land which from the beginning of the world has been the cradle of the most perfect type of the equine species.

Many times I had ventured into the desert which divided Northern Neged from the Hedgiaz, daring to explore, with the Beni-Saker and the Tiaha, the western edge of the Nefut. I had wandered over the Hammad with the Biscir and Ruola, and had gained experience from frequent visits to the frontiers of Gebel Sciammar. In general, in all my wanderings over the Syrian-Arabian desert, I had succeeded in establishing good relations with the Beduin of Central Arabia; yet Neged was still my longed-for Promised Land, and I feared, a new Moses, to die before entering, for insurmountable difficulties always hindered me.

In the month of September, 1863, His Excellency, Monsieur Armand Behic, Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works in France, wishing to put me in communication with General Fleury, A.D.C. to H.M. the Emperor Napoleon III and Director-General of the Imperial Stud, called me to Paris. On arrival, I received a gracious invitation from H.M. Victor Emanuel II to go to Turin. In December I returned to Jerusalem, entrusted with the purchase of stallions for both the French Government and for H.M. the King of Italy, and I undertook to penetrate (at last) into Neged, amongst the fanatical inhabitants of its towns and villages. I was more certain of success in this way than I could have been in the camps of the wandering Arabs, for the Emirs of Neged, who are very powerful, easily obtain from the Beduin, their subjects, the finest stallions and the best mares, and they take infinite pains to preserve the Arab race in its original perfection.

I estimated my journey as a distinctly dangerous undertaking; indeed it was judged an impossible one by all those who had lived for years in the East. I will confess that I was eclipsed by the glory of Seetzen, Burckhardt, Sadlier, Niebuhr, Wellsted, Burton, Wallin and others, worthy explorers of various parts of Arabia; so I felt an inward satisfaction in knowing that a task, fully as difficult as theirs, was awaiting me, with

¹ "*El Kamsa*—the Thoroughbred Arabian Horse. Sixteen Years' Study in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and in the Arabian Deserts." Guarmani, Bologna, 1864, 2nd ed. 1866.

hopes of accomplishing it and receiving the applause of the world of knowledge, and also to see an Italian name, my own, figuring with honour amongst the few who in this century have made geographical discoveries.

I put on the dress of the sons of the desert and armed myself well. Then, attended by my faithful old servant, Mohammed el Gezzeui, I released myself from the embraces of my sorrowful family, on the 26th January, 1864, and started in sorrow from the sad Holy city, accompanied to the Valley of Rephaim by friends and many idlers, who thought I was on the road to a voluntary execution.

Passing through Bethlehem I met a funeral procession. My good Mohammed, as superstitious as any worthy Mussulman, lost his courage, having read an ill-omen from this sad beginning, and nearly abandoned me to my fate. Seeing him waver, I appealed to him, saying: "We must all die!" the usual answer followed: "As God wills." Hardly had his lips pronounced this than he took heart and recovered from his fears.

When we reached the *duar*¹ of the Sheikh Ismail Hamdan, the head of the Taamri-Saade, I got together an escort of four persons. One of them I sent at once to the *duar* of the Sauakari el-Uedi, ordering them to expect me the next day at El-Kenu, together with three young men of that tribe; El-Kenu is the best point for swimming across the Jordan during winter. That night I spent in Sheikh Ismail's tent, lying by his side on sheep-skins, and covered with one of the ordinary carpets which the Taamri women weave so skilfully in many colours and truly original designs. It was raining, but the tent was well closed on every side, and after the first drops, the threads of the worsted becoming damp, the water ran off without soaking through, so I could not wish for a warmer or better resting place.

Unfortunately the excitement, added to the annoyance caused by certain insects which live and thrive in the skins which served as mattresses, prevented sleep, though without spoiling my rest, for I had been able to learn the dozing habits of watch-dogs and wild animals.

Two hours before daybreak I arose. My men were ready, and my horse, less frisky than on the preceding day, seemed disposed to try and shake off, on the march, the remains of the night's rain. The male inhabitants of the *duar*, advised of my departure, were assembled inside and outside the tents. Sheikh Ismail conducted me by the hand, and the rest made a circle round us. He gave me into charge of the men who were to accompany me, ordering them to conduct me to the Beni-Hamide as they thought

¹ *Duwar*, used of nomad-encampment when pitched in a circle, in contrast to *Nezel*, when the tents are in line, or *Fereik*, when they are scattered. Guarmani seems to use it as a general term for all encampments. See also Appendix I.

best, without consulting me; that is to say, leaving them to choose the time and roads, and enjoining them not to leave me until the Beni-Hamide had given their word that "their faces would not be blackened". Then turning with a fatherly air, imposed by the circumstances, he counselled prudence and patience and took leave of me with an embrace, as is the custom of the wandering Arabs of the hills of Palestine; that is to say, placing his hands on my shoulders he kissed every part of my face without actually touching me, and made the sound of a kiss in my ears. His relatives kissed me after the same fashion, while the older ones first rested their hands on my forehead, and then gave me their right hands; the other men of the *duar* contented themselves with offering me their right hands and kissing their fingers in withdrawing them, a sign of affection and respect.

At El-Kenu I found my Taamri and the three Sauakari punctually awaiting me. The waters of the Jordan were nearly frozen; the first sensation as I threw myself in was very painful. At Govueir I ordered a rest until sunset. The sky had cleared, but the air was still cold, for the wind was east. We lit a great fire with the dead trees of the Gor and cooked in the ashes the bread which we had kneaded as best we could on one of the many chalky stones lying on the banks. After twilight, we got into the gullies of the mountains to seek shelter for the night. Having found this, we lit a quantity of dry scrub and, wrapped in our cloaks, gave ourselves up to sleep.

We had scarcely been asleep an hour when we were awakened by the rumbling of stones falling from the heights above, loosened by a herd of *beden*,¹ the only inhabitants of those steep cliffs, which had probably been alarmed, on their return to their hiding places, by our fires and by the voices of the two guards who were keeping them alight.

The fires and the cloaks were not sufficient to protect us from the cold, so it was decided to continue our way in order to warm our stiffened limbs. We quickly climbed beyond the spring of Menscela, which flows down a steep gorge full of palm trees, and is much frequented by wild boars and panthers.

The wind grew more violent; without exaggeration, cutting our faces. We rested once more amongst the rocks which crown the precipice. Some of us were able to fall asleep again, accompanying by snores the chattering of our teeth. Two hours passed, then another noise aroused us. The valleys

¹ The author's footnote says: "A kind of wild goat; in Latin *ibices*, in German *steinböcke*"; it is *Capra nubiana sinaitica*, the common ibex of Sinai and the Arabian Peninsula; here at its most northern limit. The Arabic names are *bedan*, or *waal*.

of the Belka resounded with the reports of constant gun-shots not far from our resting place. Without troubling to explain this fresh incident, we bandaged the horses' feet and approached Kamara in the most profound silence, hiding ourselves in one of the thickets which here and there break the course of the stream.

At sunrise we forgot the discomforts we had undergone and started off without delay, re-ascending the mountains to a pass, close to a *redgem*¹ put up by Eastern pilgrims journeying to Jerusalem, which is here viewed for the first time from this road. As we descended the easy slope down into the valley of the Zerka Main, some white camels grazing at will on the right bank of the stream came towards us. According to Beduin ideas there could be no better augury, so I and my escort gave thanks to the Creator and we were soon welcomed in the *duar* of our old friend, the Sheikh Matlak el-Korut of the Beni-Hamide.

Matlak el-Korut's *duar* presented an unexpected state of confusion; whole families, whom we soon recognised as belonging to the Kaabneh of the Belka, filled the space reserved for the flocks. Many of the women were weeping and assisting the wounded. The noise of the firing which had made us fly from Menscela to Kamara was soon explained; these Kaabnehs, having been unexpectedly attacked by the Aduan tribe, had abandoned their *duar* and flocks, and had retreated into the territory of the Beni-Hamide, disputing every inch of ground until their families were in safety. Although outnumbered, they fought like heroes and had only ten wounded to deplore. Of their lost possessions they made small account; a nomad is too ready to look on his neighbour's goods as his own, and a well-organised raid often enriches him in a few hours far beyond anything he could gain honestly in many years; therefore he does not consider loss as irreparable. The chiefs of the refugees were the two brothers Massad and Mehzen el-Ruhai. In the neighbouring camp of one of the lesser chiefs of the Beni-Hamide, named Rascid el-Gori, the chief Sheikh of the Kaabneh, Mussa-eben-Fodaleh, was lodged, attended by the greater part of his fugitive tribe. The Aduan were to be plainly seen on the hills above the right bank of the river Zerka; their cries of vengeance, the only satisfaction they could give themselves, for they were obliged to respect the sanctuary of their enemies, made it known that they had several wounded and one dead, so the situation of the Kaabneh was very serious, and perhaps they would not be able to return to their own country in the Belka. Besides, they themselves did not consider the blood of Akmet-eben-Fodaleh, the father of their present Sheikh, as fully avenged. He had been

¹ *Rijm*, cairn.

killed by Diab's orders in the last days of the previous year to compensate for the death of one of his own Aduan, Methal el-Kassen; this had taken place eight months before. But the Kaabneh, who denied having killed him, considered they had the right to revenge themselves on the greatest of the Aduan Sheikhs; and this forced Diab to chase them into the Kura. These tribal wars are the reason why they so frequently change their country and why some of the families migrate. For example, we have the Taamri, who were formerly of the Beni-Hares tribe of the Uedi-Mussa, but now inhabit the Judean Desert; the Areinet, first established in the plains of the Belka, then on the declivities of the Belka above the Gor, and now confined to the pastures of the Palestine mountains nearest to the Jordan and the Dead Sea; the Kaabneh themselves, of Eben-Bes, who left the Belka to seek security in Gebel-Usdum. Quite possibly the tribe of Mussa-eben-Fodaleh will not again leave the mountains of Kura.

The Beni-Hamide salute their relations, friends and acquaintances with repeated kisses on the mouth; the first being given quickly, without removing their lips, and the later ones singly, one by one, lasting two or three seconds each.

The flocks were all out at pasture when we arrived, only one goat was left at home, and this was taken and killed. They examined its entrails in the presence of witnesses, and certified that it was not with young; a precaution which necessitated the return of only one goat from the Sheikh Matlak, and not a goat and kid, as the owners would otherwise have claimed, without other indemnity. It is permitted to choose from the nearest flock on the arrival of guests if the host's flocks are not at hand. The Sheikh Matlak and his superior, Kaled-abu-Breis, appeared, whether attracted by the smell of the roast meat, or purely for the pleasure of seeing me again, I cannot say. They released the Taamri from their responsibilities with regard to me that very evening, promising to conduct me in safety to the Beni-Saker and not to leave me before being certain I was in no danger.

Night had fallen when, accompanied by Mehzen el-Ruhai, I walked along the Zerkauein. Finally, seating myself on the rocks in amongst the oleanders bordering the stream, at a point where it disappears underground (an hour and a half to the south of its source) in a wooded hollow, a favourite haunt of wild boars, I induced my companion, a thief by profession, to relate some of his most daring exploits; not because the relation of misdeeds gave me pleasure, but because I wished to be certain once more that the desert thieves are always faithful to the traditions of their early teachers; and in fact he related to me many of the courageous acts which made Taabbata-Sciarran and Soliak famous.

On my return to the camp, the few hours I was able to rest with my head on my knapsack completely restored me after the fatigues of the day, and I awoke feeling ready to confront anything. Sheikh Matlak, his cousin Menezel and another horseman, formed my escort. The Taamri, having been paid and discharged, returned to their own *duar*.

We proceeded in silence and arrived at Uedi el-Temed, which is pronounced et-Temed, the "t" being a solar letter, which makes the article change its sound. I pay no attention to this rule, as those who do not know Arabic would not know that the article depends on the noun; therefore, I always write it as though it were before words beginning with lunar letters, which do not change their sound, so that the difference is in the pronunciation and not in the orthography. Consequently, I explain once and for all that according to the rules of the Arabic grammar, Es-Serhan is to be pronounced thus and not El-Serhan, and Et-Tobeit, Es-Suan, etc., instead of El-Tobeit, El-Suan, etc. As I have said, we arrived at Uedi el-Temed, almost without being aware of it, when my horse shied, frightened by a dead fox on the road, and I recalled to my mind an idea I had had on a former excursion, namely, that El-Temed, previously a river, had eventually become only a stream, its waters having been lost in a subterranean bed. More than two hundred wells were dug out in the centre of what I believe to be its abandoned upper course, and water was found in all of them at a depth of a few yards. The ground near by was bored in vain to thrice that depth; yet I was often assured that objects which had dropped into one of the wells nearest to its probable source were found again in the leathern buckets, *delo*, with which water was drawn from the furthest wells.

We were not long in arriving at the encampment of the Beni-Saker and halted a moment at the first tent to ask how to find the camp of the head Feizis without losing any time. As we had presumed, we were told they were on the banks of El-Galeite. Being unable to reach them before sunset, we contented ourselves that day with crossing the Salie, and with accepting the hospitality of the first person who might offer it on the farther bank. The standing waters of the Salie were very cold.

No matter how poor a Beduin may be, one is certain of never being without supper on entering his tent. Amongst the small and poorer tribes, guests are invariably entertained in a tent set apart for them, and are fed every day by a different family. The larger tribes have also their guest-tents in every encampment, but many of the Beduin, in order to be considered generous, will not permit the stranger to lodge there and take him almost by force to their own tents. So it happened in our case. The

invitation we accepted was proffered by one of the greatest warriors of the Beni-Saker or Skur, named Emseus; one of his sons lit a fire of camel's dung and dry roots, laid in a square hole about two-thirds of a metre wide and twenty centimetres deep, which was dug, as amongst all nomads, in the part of the tent reserved for the men. His wife ran to fetch more wood, whilst he, placing his left hand on the mane of his mare, which a relative had brought for him, and resting his lance on the ground held in his right hand, vaulted vigorously on to the back of the animal; then, without using stirrups, for even the kind of covering which takes the place of a saddle was lacking, he started at a rapid pace for a hill not far distant, and disappeared behind it. In a short time he returned with the same rapidity, and with a kid all ready killed.

I noticed that, like most Beduin, he used no bit, but only a halter to guide the mare. A horse is never bridled until needed for fighting. The animal breathes freely without a bit and can travel farther and more swiftly. I was not surprised to see a saddle without stirrups, for it is hard enough to find one with them in the desert, and few horsemen can boast of a complete harness.

Another thing I noticed was the hair of Emseus's wife, which I observed as she returned, bearing a load of wood heavy enough to break an ass's back. Well indeed might she be proud of her long, thick, fair tresses. Fair women are far from uncommon amongst the Beni-Saker, all of whom, whether fair or dark, have gentler expressions than are usual among other Beduin, to such an extent indeed that they seem more like citizens of Kerak or villagers of Salt, their flashing, gazelle-like eyes having no trace of shyness.

My observations did not hinder the cooking of the kid. It was set before us boiled, cut up in tiny pieces, in a great saucepan, and each one helped himself according to his appetite. I was probably the only one, having burnt myself twice, who thought how useful forks would be instead of fingers. The meal over, as there was not water enough for washing, we went outside, and after first licking our fingers well we dried them on the flap of the tent. We then went inside again at once to sleep, our heads resting none too comfortably on camel saddles, the only cushions our poor, good Emseus could give us.

The next day we wasted much time in the encampment, the sun being again on the horizon before we reached the Feizi on the Galeite.¹ Many of their tents were supported by four or five poles and were sixteen to twenty metres long, but not more than three and a half wide. Fifty mares,

¹ See note, p. 63.

ready saddled, only with their girths slightly loosened, were grazing near by, apparently free. The rope from the head-stall was passed between their fore-legs and tied above the hock of the left hind-leg. Thus, without preventing their trotting, the freedom of their movements was curtailed and, if they strayed far, it was easy to catch them. Sometimes, as a greater precaution, so as to impede any speed on the part of the more spirited ones, we fastened the left legs, the left hind-leg being tied, as I have said, to the corresponding fore-leg above the knee. These fastenings rub the hair and the skin and form a sore in the naked flesh; when the sore heals the hair grows white. In the evening the mares are called by their owners with a particular cry, and are tied by the fetlock to the tent-poles, the head being left free; nearby are chained the stallions kept for breeding purposes; the rest are sent to pasture far from the mares and watched by special guards.

Before the tents are to be seen the lances belonging to the warriors of the family who dwelt within, and, in front of the men's quarters, also the lances of the guests. This encampment, arranged without any method, was a reunion of the families of the most noble Feizi. All the sheikhs of this sub-division of the Beni-Saker were present, with the exception of Scelasce el-Bakit, who had left some days earlier for Tafle. I noticed Scelasce el-Bakit's absence as I recognised his tent in the centre of all the rest, without any lance to show that he was at home. I also noticed that there were no guests in the tent of Sheikh Eid el-Soliman, *Katib*¹ of that tribe, and of his younger brothers Rumeah and Negem. It was natural that I should choose this one to lodge in, so as to keep to Beduin custom and not to add to the inconvenience of the other chiefs. I will not describe at length the manner of receiving me on that occasion, which is just the same for all guests, and is no different to the customs of the other nomads. It is enough to say that, in embracing, the Skur imprint a kiss on the face, whereas the Taamri do it in the air; that the richer Beni-Hamide more often offer sheep than goats and kids; and that they add rice cooked in water and then seasoned with butter. It is eaten with three fingers: the thumb, first finger and middle one, sufficient being taken to fill the palm of the other hand, and after it has been worked into a ball, it is put into the mouth on the back of the thumb. When the meal is finished, water and soap are brought; if this should fail, sand is given as a substitute.

With the Beni-Saker, camel's milk is drunk in abundance both morning and evening; this is the best milk, and the only substitute for bread and water without giving one the feeling of privation. With this one also gets

¹ Scribe, secretary.

bread, smect omelettes, rice and milk and, on great occasions, camel's flesh, which is not nearly so insipid as many travellers would have one believe.

It may be surprising that up till now I have not mentioned coffee, which is as necessary to the life of an Arab as the air he breathes. The Beni-Saker, more greedy than many other tribes, use, besides the real black coffee, which is drunk unsweetened, a so-called "white coffee", which is merely an infusion of sugar, cloves and nutmeg. It is very stimulating, and wise guests should abstain from it; as is seen, it has nothing to do with coffee except the conventional name.

The Beni-Saker are true Beduin. They do not sell their butter, so as to keep it for their visitors; they train greyhounds for hunting, also hawks and falcons, and they hunt the gazelle and the leopard on horseback. The hunting of the gazelle is too well known to need description. The leopard-hunt, which might be expected to offer excitement, is, on the contrary, far less interesting, it being difficult to meet with a more cowardly beast. Two days after my arrival on the Galeite, I left my Mohammed to prepare for our departure and went off to hunt a leopard, with several well-mounted horsemen. The tracks had been found the evening before, and we were guided by them to its den. Immediately he found himself discovered the leopard bolted with all its strength and with incredible swiftness. He was caught up in less than three minutes and being exhausted he threw himself on the ground, breathing as hard as he could to frighten the horses, several of which would not go near him. A horseman then ran him through the neck with his lance, while another dismounted from his mare and placed his foot on the iron; the shaft of the lance belonged to the first horseman, who had sprung to the ground to hold the lance firm; the animal was caught! He was bound, slung on bars and carried back to camp to be skinned, after having served for several hours, carefully tied up with every precaution, as a plaything for the children and a subject of curiosity to the women.

During the three days I stayed at the Galeite I could arrange at leisure for the most urgent provisions for my long journey. Eid el-Soliman, to whom I had given a pair of "Devisme" revolvers, gave me in exchange a dromedary of the *Udekan*¹ race. I bought another one for my servant, and I chose from the household of the Sheikh Fendi el-Feizi a fine young man, quick and intelligent, named El-Dreibi, to serve me as guide and *rafik*.²

Being accustomed to the fatigues and chances of the desert and being

¹ Benat Udeyhan, the famous Sharari breed.

² A way-fellow.

known to nearly all the principal chiefs of the Arab-Syrian nomadic tribes, I did not consider it an imprudence to do without the expensive escorts of Anasi and Sciammar *rafiks*, although these would be absolutely necessary for any other traveller. I might also have dispensed with the guide, had I not been desirous of presenting myself in Neged as under the protection of the Beni-Saker. Besides this, I had to think of saving my servant from as much fatigue as possible, for he was unaccustomed to living like an animal; so that a third person was not to be despised, for he could help us, when we halted, to mount guard (for there is always the danger of a nocturnal assault from some robber), to take the dromedaries to graze and to get wood for the fire, which could only be lit when the undulations of the ground prevented its being seen from afar.

For prudence sake, I asked Fendi el-Feizi for a letter of recommendation addressed to all the tribes and allies of the Beni-Saker. I obtained another letter from Talal-eben-Feisal-el-Sceilan, chief of the Ruola, and signed by a refugee Ehtebe, to the Sheikh Sultan-eben-Rubean, of the Ehtebe-Ruga¹ of Central Arabia, who are independent and are renowned for their daring raids on the territories of the Neged chiefs and of the nomads subject to them. In Fendi el-Feizi's letter I figured, under the name of Kalil-Aga, as an agent for the Ottoman Government, commissioned to buy horses in the desert.

Talal-eben-Feisal had been the guest of the Feizi for several days. His father, Feisal el-Sceilan, had been outlawed, having killed a relative belonging to the Mascehur. The entire family of the dead man tracked him for months and, eventually, forty horsemen surprised him in his tent which he had unwisely struck far from his tribe. Feisal, who was reputed to be one of the bravest warriors the Beduin could boast of, did not lose courage in the face of this grave danger, but he had no time to put on his armour. Rushing out to fight, he cut through both armour and shoulder of the first assailant, but was then overthrown by a pistol shot. As he attempted to rise and defend himself, his brains were dashed out by a sword-thrust from the Sheikh Nahar el-Mascehur, brother of his victim. It is related of Nahar el-Mascehur that he bathed his moustache in the blood of his enemy.

The Beduin armour, *dera*, is a coat of mail with short sleeves, completed by a kind of helmet, the shape of a basin, called by the Beduins the cup (el Kasse). The Beni-Saker have two hundred armed warriors, the Anasi have many more. All the large tribes have armed men. The armour generally comes from Persia, a commoner sort coming from Mesopotamia.

¹ Ruuqa, one of the two great divisions of the Ataiba.

There are still to be found in the hands of the Beduin many of those precious scimitar and *kangiar* blades which came respectively from the ancient armourers of Damascus and the more modern artificers of the Korassan.

It rained in torrents on the eve of my departure. All came to congratulate me, for, the heavier the rain in winter, the longer would the water remain in the natural reservoirs on the road I should have to traverse. During the night a strong wind arose, and the soaking tent threatened to be blown down. The women and slaves woke up and went out to tighten the cords and strengthen the poles, the women allowing their long robes to trail in the mud. The men never moved; I had to make a sign to my Mohammed to follow their example, for as a Mussulman townsman he was inclined to go to their assistance.

The cloth of the Feizi tents is woven at Tafilé and the neighbouring villages, this forming part of the tribute paid by the villages in return for the protection of the Beni-Saker. As the tribute is paid unwillingly, they compensated themselves by supplying articles of an inferior quality as the equivalent of the annual tax; for this reason, the tents of the Skur are not to be compared with those which the Taamri weave for their own use, these being rain-proof, while the others are not. The wives of the chiefs are recognised by their long robes; modesty ordains, in the higher classes, that the face is to be uncovered and the feet hidden. This has actually become a prerogative of nobility, a sad prerogative! Whether high-born or low, the Beduin women, even if they have slaves, are all obliged to put up and prepare the tents, to strike and roll them up, and to load and unload them, as is needed; also to attend to all the domestic work, such as collecting wood and dung to cook on; and, lastly, to find time as best they can to look after and bring up their children.

On the 3rd of February, Matlak returned to his mountains with a present of money which I gave him, while Mohammed and El-Dreibi loaded our dromedaries, each with a little food and water-skin, not omitting the indispensable sheep-skin coat. We then started towards Teime, with the best wishes of the Feizi. We departed like true Beduin, in old clothes without even an extra shirt, so as not to excite envy or attract attention.

We reached Teime on the 11th of February.¹

At the Abu-Scerciuk² we did not light a fire, for we were too much in the open and too near the Belka mountains. At its great reservoirs we changed out of our skins the dirty water which we had obtained in the

¹ Guarmani did the 300 miles in eight to nine days; I took eleven days over practically the same route.

² See note, p. 70.

Galeite. The camels make water as they drink in the Galeite, so that the water drawn there is sure to go bad in the water-skins under a baking sun. Before going to sleep we took our dromedaries to graze; having brought them back and made them kneel down close together, we tied the right knee with a rope, so that they had to stay in that position till morning. In spite of this precaution, one of them contrived to get up and endeavoured to escape, so we had to tie up the fetlock also. Our dromedaries were well-bred and accustomed to the *gazzu*;¹ we could therefore sleep peacefully and be certain of not hearing their voices. The night was cold and the dew came down like rain.

We slept for four hours, then continued our journey in silence. I was engaged in surveying our route with my prismatic compass, and in sketching the configuration of the region, hill and hollow. El-Dreibi went first to explore the surroundings; and Mohammed, hunched up on his mount, was swearing inwardly. We reached Uedi-Sciummeri, tired out by the burning heat of the sun, which, in that season, is too great a contrast to the cold of the night.

Having found a place sufficiently hidden to camp in, we unloaded and let our dromedaries loose to graze. Directly they were free, they turned their eyes towards a bend in the stream-bed between two hills and stood quite still. We suspiciously looked in the same direction but could see nothing. Mohammed unmercifully beat the poor beasts, which now seemed turned to stone; it was most curious! El-Dreibi was anxious, while I, owing to some presentiment, ordered our bags to be packed again, helping with them myself as usual. El-Dreibi obeyed and approved; Mohammed obeyed but without understanding. The dromedaries no sooner felt us in the saddles than they quickened their steps and retreated. For several minutes we retired, re-ascending the hills and often looking back, but still unable to see anything. After a time our suspicions were calmed, and we should have returned and again descended the hill, had we not suddenly heard the familiar cry which the Beduin make to recall their dromedaries, and we saw a flock of them trotting from the bend in the stream-bed to a gully close by, from whence came forth a number of Beduin, one of whom was dressed in a long red overcoat.

El-Dreibi, calling out to the *gazzu*, fled into the hills. We followed at a trot for about a quarter of an hour, calculating that if our unwelcome companions proved to be enemies they could not reach us in a body; while we, by imitating young Horace, could have reason in our haste (*i.e.* engage them one by one).

¹ Foray.

Thinking ourselves far enough off, and sufficiently safe on the heights we occupied, we paused to examine our supposed enemy. We found that they, like us, had been afraid of pursuit and followed the same tactics. They had left the plain, and as we fled to the hills on the right bank of the Sciummeri they went to those on the left bank, and from their ridge were likewise watching us.

In the desert the most dangerous foe is man; on hearing or seeing him one takes to flight until in a safe enough place to ascertain if he is alone or in company, in order to reckon whether meeting with him would be risky or not.

The Beduin had imitated our courageous example so well that they seemed more alarmed than we were. We were half an hour away by road, and I could only distinguish a confused mass, but El-Dreibi counted five men, as well as some women and children, and saw that they were all making signals to attract our attention. Mohammed, who was half blind, agreed with El-Dreibi, although I am certain he saw nothing.

As we could not remain inactive for ever, though our position gave us an advantage over an adversary three times our number, we descended to the Uedi for the second time. An equal number of Beduin followed suit on the opposite side. When within gunshot, we halted to parley. El-Dreibi was recognised as a Sakari and he discovered the others were Scerarat; the two tribes were allied, so there was no longer any fear. We joined in with them and arranged to camp together. The women and children and the other two men (my intelligent guide had been correct) soon joined us; and we confided to each other with much ado our fears and emotions of the past danger, congratulating ourselves on our "courageous" and prudent behaviour.

The man in the red coat was an extemporary poet, Soliman el-Limani, the other Beduin were his sons, and the women and children completed the family. Poverty had ousted him from his tribe, and they were making for the Beni-Saker, with whom they meant to settle, for they knew that the northern Beduin like and appreciate the followers of Euterpe, Erato, Calliope and Polymnia, and pay them generously. There is a great competition amongst the Scerarat, who are all poets; a competition which had become unbearable for the poor old man. Perhaps age had weakened the poetic flow, but he was embittered by knowing that the idle no longer cared for his improvisations, nor applauded them with the same zeal as formerly.

The Scerarat expected us to be their guests for the night. We entered their miserable tent, out of which the women and children were turned,

and it was with difficulty that we persuaded them to allow the children, at any rate, inside to sleep. A little *semek*¹ flour, a loaf of *tartut*² bread and camel's milk was all the little feast consisted of. I call it "feast", because, in order "to get the maggots out of our heads", Soliman el-Limani took his *rababa* and improvised a long poem, stimulating thus our appetite with the harsh sound of the instrument and the monotonous cadence of his verses. The final word of each was like a refrain, repeated by the empty mouths of his family and by my companions, between their mouthfuls.

When we left next day, I threw a few piastres to two or three of the smallest of the children. The old bard esteemed it an act of the greatest liberality and wished to embrace me. This I permitted, notwithstanding the eyes made at me by El-Dreibi, to whom a Scerari kiss given to a Turkish Aga corresponded to what, in India, would be the lowest pariah's offering to a Brahmin priest.

For the next four days there was a continuous slight rain, and we could not find any shelter, being determined to take the direct road so as not to lose any time. As long as we were on the march, our fur coats, being well greased, served as umbrellas, for we put them over our heads. Thus I was enabled, comfortably, to take a few indispensable notes, and to correct or complete those taken on other occasions. The nights were a misery to us, as may well be imagined. At the end of the fourth day we saw a streak of clear pure blue sky between the clouds with even a greater joy than Noah felt at the appearance of the rainbow. In the evening, when we stopped, the wet scrub refused to light, but we were so grateful at not being frozen by the cold rain of the preceding nights that we did not care if the wind came from the Scerkie, which is the East, the Sirocco, or the Levant wind.

Day came and with the day the sun, and found us already awake. The Scerarat camels had been tethered in the valley of Feger for the night, but before dawn were grazing on the hill-sides. The first herdsmen we met pointed out to us the tent of Selim el-Kaui,³ the richest and most influential of their chieftains. The sky was cloudy enough to protect us from the sun but not enough to make us fear bad weather again, and indeed it kept fine until we arrived. Selim el-Kaui was the only Scerarat amongst

¹ *Samh.* See Wallin's description, *J.R.G.S.* vol. xxiv, 1854, p. 126, also *Arabia Deserta*, vol. i, pp. 312-13.

² *Cynomorium coccineum*, a parasitic plant which grows on the roots of the *ghada* bush, and is edible.

³ Wallin mentions a Sharari Shaikh, *Alhdwy*, who was chief of the whole tribe. See *J.R.G.S.* vol. xxiv, 1854, p. 150.

hundreds who wore a shirt under his *abah*, but it was of the dirtiest. His sons were in rags like the other Beduin of his tribe. Some of these wretched Scerarat were completely naked, others wore an *abah*, the left corner being tucked up and passed through a belt made of strips of plaited leather, which fell over the loins, and without which they declare they can neither walk nor be men; the more superstitious ornamented them with amulets, talismans, etc. They recalled to my mind the criticism passed on our renowned sculptor Cavaliere Dini's beautiful group in plaster in his studio at Turin, representing a dying Beduin leaning against his wounded horse. The horse represents the purest type of Arab, far superior in strength and looks, not only to the horse in the equestrian statue of Charles Albert by Cavaliere Marochetti, but also to the real charger in the splendid equestrian statue of Emanuel Philibert by the same renowned sculptor. This Beduin is naked: a fact not credited and therefore criticised. Would that the critics might come to the Scerarat encampments and see that Dini does not exaggerate; and although, perhaps, he has allowed himself an artist's licence in the composition, there are a thousand similar examples in the history of sculpture. They would then wish, as do I, that Dini would turn his work of art into marble, and thus popularise in Italy this son of the desert and his noble companion.

The Scerarie women make a sleeveless shirt out of their *abah*. Few of them dress like the other wandering Arab women. The rag, kept in place by the *aakal* which they put on their heads, covers the upper part, leaving their long and beautiful hair waving loose over their foreheads, while four long plaits hang over their shoulders reaching to their knees. As amongst the Beni-Saker, there are many fair-haired ones. After the attractive Aduani of the Belka, they are considered the best-looking Beduin women of the Arabian deserts. They live in a manly way, receiving guests and attending to them if their husbands are absent. They show themselves without shyness and, as the arrival of a stranger is a rare event, no sooner does one appear than he is surrounded by the entire female population of the encampment, the girls peeping round the hanging which divides the tent into two compartments, the married women in the same circle as the men, and the children wherever they can push themselves.

The beauty of the Scerarie women, combined with their strength and grace, is the most positive contradiction to the absurd fable which asserts that the Scerarat, a subdivision of the Beni-Kelb from the southern Arabian desert, have their origin from the monstrous connection of a woman and a dog. As the likeness of the father is more often transmitted to the offspring than the mother's, the Scerarat, instead of being nearly

as perfect as the Circassians, ought to rival the monkeys! The men are worthy of the women in their splendid build; like true shepherds they prefer sleeping in the open, under the dew, which is very abundant in their territory and only makes them hoarse without giving them cold. In winter it is rare to find one of them not hoarse.

If the Beni-Kelb, who, as Burckhardt asserts on the strength of Arab information, are to be found in the neighbourhood of the Douaser, live like the Scerarat, they must be equally hoarse, and one can imagine that this gave rise to the exaggerated tale that they bark like dogs: so this would naturally be the origin of the fable. I do not deny that the Scerarat are descended from the Beni-Kelb, but I claim that they come from the Beni-Kelb of the Beni-Kodaa of Yemen, who settled nearby in the ancient Duma el-Gendalie, towards the end of the second century of the Christian era, and not from the offspring of an imaginary infamous connection.¹

The same kind of supper given us by the poor Scerari poet on the Sciummeri was offered us by the rich chieftain, except that the camel's milk was better, not being rendered bitter by the fatigues of the journey which the Limani camels had undergone. The froth on this milk was exactly like whipped cream, to be eaten with the little finger after we had been permitted to quench our thirst with a few mouthfuls. The difference lay in the fact that Selim el-Kau'i abstained from improvisation. The women and children, amid the laughter of the company, broke in every minute to advise us to listen to the interminable sing-song of an old sheikh, a relative of Kau'i's. El-Dreibi was carried away by the Pindaric torrents which assailed me and wished to show himself sensible of the verses, and, being worked up to a high pitch of enthusiasm, he composed a *casside* which, although not actually hissed by the Scerarat, amused them immoderately. In order to reprove him for his courage, the women, picking his verses to pieces one by one, composed others on the same theme, and these El-Dreibi himself was the first to applaud.

Mohammed wished to drink some water from our water-skins before going to sleep, for, having found that the camel's milk had acted as an aperient the first days, he did not intend drinking much of it. The children thought this a sacrilege, and tried to prevent him, not understanding how anyone could drink water when milk was not lacking. Many of the old men assured him they had never drunk water in their lives. The women enquired if he were jealous of the dromedaries. The poor man let them chaff him, wondering how to escape from the difficulty, and was very

¹ The Shararat, said to be of the same stock as the Hutaim and sometimes reckoned as descendants of the Bani Hilal, but nothing is known of their real origin. See note, p. 74.

angry with El-Dreibi, who laughed the loudest at him. I thought it useless to call my *sanci* to order, and, having heard that a dromedary was about to foal, I asked Selim el-Kauï to go outside the tent with me, especially as I wished for an excuse to speak privately to him.

The dromedary, which was standing up, betrayed great suffering. The birth was proceeding normally. The forelegs were out, and the head which was beginning to appear was soon free. Another effort liberated the shoulders, when a shepherd approached to hold it up, without pulling it, until it was entirely out. He allowed the mother to bite the cord with her teeth, then taking the foal on one side, he pulled out the legs and pressed the hump to loosen the joints and the vertebræ. The dromedary and her foal were wrapped in two old *abaks* and separated from the herd. The foal being a female and of noble breed, the women gathered together and uttered their *zagaril* or cries of joy; the Scerarat value their dromedaries as highly as the other Beduin do their precious horses.

My conversation with Selim el-Kauï was not reassuring, the news received from Neged being as bad as it could be. Feisal-eben-Sehud was at war with the Ehtebe; Talat-eben-Rascid had sent his uncle Obeid in *gazzu* against the Ruola, and announced a campaign under his own command during the early days of the spring. The intentions of the ruler of the Gebel might well mean a threat to the Scerarat, although not actually to Selim el-Kauï and his people. The rest of the Scerarat had refused to pay tribute, and were therefore rebels; he, on the other hand, had always paid the tribute and considered himself as neutral between his master and the rest of his tribe. Another even more disquieting piece of news, brought that very day, was that a large band of Sciuemet, led by their chief, Talal-abu-Scema, had been discovered only three hours west of Teime. Selim el-Kauï expected to be attacked the very next day, for only a month ago he had made an incursion into their territory and brought back a considerable booty. With this fear he could neither accompany me to Teime nor provide me with the escort El-Dreibi asked for in the name of the Fendi el-Feizi, the chief of the Tuha.

Two Scerarat watched all night, and kept up the fires ready to give the alarm. We departed at daybreak without taking leave or thanking our hosts, which is according to custom.

On account of El-Dreibi, the Sciuemet, who were friendly with the Beni-Saker, were not to be feared. We reached Teime in two days. An unforeseen difficulty awaited us at the gate of the village. The dromedaries were frightened at the towers on the walls and refused to go near them, neither would kindness nor beating induce them, until the obliging townsfolk

brought out ten camels to meet us; then ours, following in their footsteps, marched towards the gate and passed through it like sheep into a pen.

Declining to go to the *menak* or house kept for strangers, I was conducted to the Emir Rumman, to whom I had sent El-Dreibi in advance to introduce me under the assumed name of Kalil-Aga, head of the stables of His Excellency Fuad Pasha, a lie which the Grand Vizier will undoubtedly pardon, considering the successful result of my venture.

The Emir Rumman was a little man of sixty with a red face and a stomach very unlike a Beduin's; he welcomed me with apparent pleasure and even solicitude. My status as a Turkish official made it unnecessary for me to offer him a present, yet having succeeded in making him anxious to possess a few trifles of small value from my knapsack, I pressed him to accept them, whilst he reciprocated by giving me all the information I needed. Thus, before entering Northern Neged, by comparing what the Emir Rumman told me with what had already been related by my nomad friends, I was familiar with the history, ways and customs of the inhabitants, and could therefore adapt myself readily to them and so be free to travel at leisure. At first I did not allow the Emir to know my intention of going there; by degrees I made him believe that I would go if he advised it and if I were unable to procure the kind of horses H.E. Fuad Pasha wanted from the Aleidan, Uld-Suleiman, or the Sciammar. For this reason I asked and easily obtained from him a letter of introduction to the Emir Talal-eben-Rascid, the King, or rather Governor, of the Gebel-Sciammar, a letter which confirmed Fendi el-Feizi's statement explaining the reason why I was not furnished with more official documents to give credence to the veracity of my mission.

On the 13th of February I left Teime with an Aleidan¹ Beduin. Mohammed and El-Dreibi stayed behind with the money, which I did not care to risk in a country entirely unknown to me. My intention was to go over the pastures once inhabited by the Beni-Tai;² from thence to cross the Gebel-Harre³ and get to the Ehtebe, which the inhabitants of the Hedgiaz call Eteibe; and finally to enter the Neged from the western frontier of Cassim.

For three days my guide kept to the south-south-east, making for his chief's, Sheikh Redgia's, Aleida encampment on the Keibar road, among the northern rocks of the Harre, a few minutes to the east of some great

¹ See note, p. 81.

² *Beni-Tai*, Bani Tayy, the early inhabitants of Northern Najd, but themselves invaders from the far south, later driven out or assimilated by the Shammar.

³ *Gebel-Harre*. The Khaibar Harra or lava-field; see also p. 30.

natural reservoirs of rain-water.¹ Owing to the difficulties of the road, Keibar was still, as the Beduin say, a good day distant, being thus ten or twelve hours farther from Teime than Tebuk, which the inhabitants of Teime always reach in three days, at the time of the caravan passage from Mecca.²

The Sheikh Redgia, nephew of one of the worthiest antagonists who ever fought the Uakabites, gave me a reception which made me think he believed little in my horse-dealing and that he looked on me as a spy from the Sublime Porte. Diplomatic replies were all that I received to my questions as regards horses. An endless *kiriella* of complaints on the conduct of the Neged Princes, with the most minute details of their exactions and of their wealth, showed me that the "friend" was tired of being a vassal, and that he would like the entire tribe to rebel and fight, did he not fear being alone in the struggle. I stayed three days in his tent, for, though he could not refuse to show me the stallions which he said were the best in his tribe, they were now scattered over his territory and it took some time to find them and bring them in. As I did not find these stallions as good as I expected to find in this land of Zeid el-Keil, the giant of the Beni-Ghaut and of Beni-Tai, on the 19th I went on my way towards Giof-uld-Suleiman.³

Leaving the main track sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, I took a zigzag line across the Ghebaal⁴ and Harre grazing lands, coming by chance on the locality where the choicest animals of the Aleidan and the Uld-Suleiman were grazing. As the former had taken every precaution to keep me from seeing them, I could expect nothing better from the latter. My guide had noticed that I was not easily taken in, being too used to the tricks and superstitions of the Beduin; and, stimulated by the

¹ Three days would be a fair allowance for the journey to the northern edge of the Khaibar Harra, about 120 miles. The position of the Alaida encampment must have been in the region over which Doughty wandered in March 1878, and which he calls *Yeteroha* (Yatruha). It was full of nomads, Hutaim, Bishr, and even Suluba, at the time of his (Doughty's) visit, there is a watering of the Bishr, "ancient ten-fathom wells and well steyned" called *Yemmen* (Yaman), but we know of no such reservoirs as mentioned by Guarmani. Huber gives, on native information, a list of wells scattered over this area, which shows it to be fairly abundant in waterings. There are no less than fifteen wells on a line between Taima and Khaibar. He also hints at the existence of an unidentified site, a Jewish settlement called Qasr Ablaq, in this region. See *Journal*, pp. 486, 487, 561, 633.

² Guarmani is quite correct; the difference in the distance between Taima and Tabuk, and between Taima and Khaibar, is roughly 110 miles against 140 miles. Wallin records that it is three long days from Taima to Khaibar.

³ See note, p. 86.

⁴ See note, p. 85.

promised reward if he acted in my interests, he had decided to serve me faithfully, and of this I was to have proof. We preferred sleeping in the open air with the herdsmen, rather than sheltering in the encampments scattered over the plains. We encountered suspicion in the tents, but under a starlit sky the heart expands more easily; besides, if the herdsmen are slaves, they have a right to be selfish, and if free men, they often do not belong to the tribe and do not think it necessary to keep their secrets.

So long as we kept on Aleidan territory our search was never in vain. I could see some very fine stallions, although few in number, but they were not of the type I wanted, nor would they have been appreciated in Europe on account of their small size. In Europe they have not faith enough in the regenerative power of the thoroughbred.

We were often misled by the Uld-Suleiman, because my guide was not so used to their ways as he was to those of his own countrymen. But with care and patience, after having pretended to admire some of the screws out at pasture, we found means of seeing their finest stallions.

On reaching Giof,¹ we wanted to water our dromedaries; mine had drunk nothing since Teime. I was much surprised to see both my guide and his companion go past the well; it seemed incredible to me that the dew they got on the plants they ate every morning could be enough to quench their thirst. This made me certain that dromedaries can bear thirst in springtime like the gazelle.

The chief of the Uld-Suleiman had gone to Kail. Not wishing to await his return, we went back to the Aleidan. The encampment of Sheikh Redgia was not where we had left it, so we had to pass the night of the 28th in a kind of grotto² formed of great blocks of basalt and, for once, had to sleep supperless, our bags being empty and the nearest tents three or four hours off.

In eleven hours next day we reached Keibar.

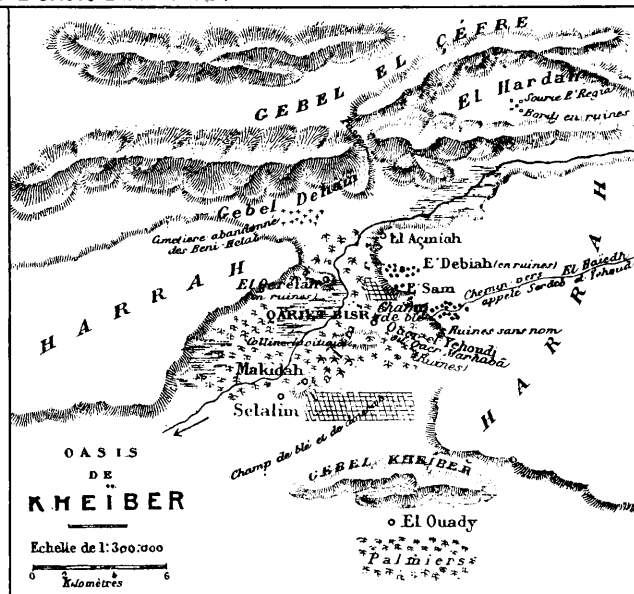
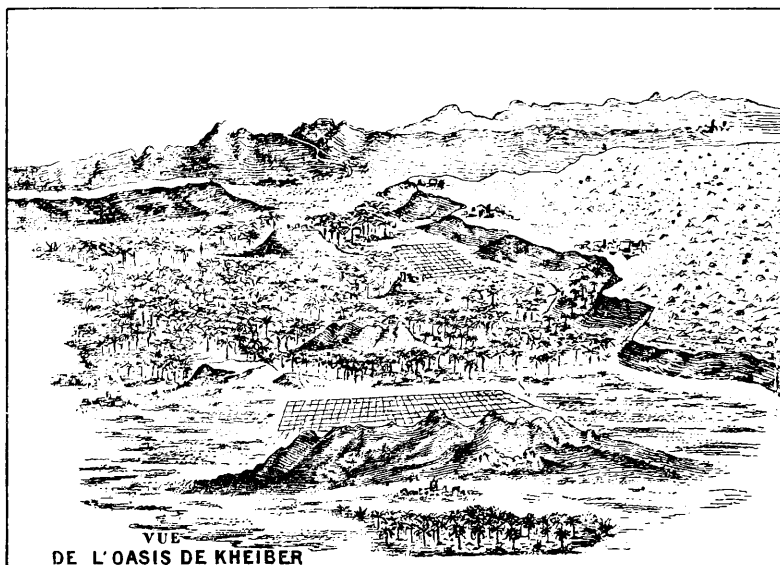
The uninitiated stranger, on entering Keibar, would be surprised at the appearance of the inhabitants and think himself miraculously transported into the Soudan.³

The sheikhs of the town seeing me coming down on foot over the rough

¹ See note, p. 86.

² Huber also mentions a grotto in this locality; there are probably many in the lavas. Doughty, too, in this same Harra found "clayey water, in a cavern". See *Bull. Soc. de Géog.* vii^{me} Série, vol. vi, p. 95. Also *Arabia Deserta*, vol. ii, p. 69.

³ Varthema was also surprised at the complexions of the (Jewish) inhabitants of Khaibar; he remarks "they are more black than any other colour".



(From inset on Huber's Map, published in the Bull. Soc. de Géog., Paris, 1884)

path from the Harre came out to meet me; one took charge of my dromedary, which I had liberated in order to avoid risking my neck amongst the basalt rocks, which would undoubtedly have happened had I ridden him, for the dromedary, placing his foot on a loose slab, had tumbled down hill. The poor brute, after sliding some way, had great difficulty in regaining his equilibrium, and this with the most extraordinary contortions.

At Keibar there is no *manak*¹ for strangers, who are received by the Sheikh in his wretched abode. My title of "Aga" gained me better luck. I was entertained by the Abyssinian Aleidan, Prince Talal-eben-Rascid's representative,² who lived in a large tower in the plain hard by the rock which bears the ruin of the Hebrew Fort (Kasser el-Iehud),³ and here I partook of true Beduin hospitality.

The following day, 1st March, I visited the ruins, which now are only a mass of masonry, without any trace of inscriptions or anything of artistic merit. I sent away my Aleide guide and, with the Abyssinian's help, made a contract with two Ehteim well known by the Ehtebe, and formerly thieves by profession, like our old acquaintance Mehzen el-Ruhai.

At sunset on the 2nd of March I arrived at the sandy valley which bounds the Harre on the south, where the Persian pilgrims pass on their way to Medina.⁴ I might have got there in less time had I kept to the so-called direct road instead of taking a goat path round the mountains,

¹ "Manokh, place of kneeling down of camels, where passengers alight, and are received to the public hospitality" (Doughty).

² At this time Khaibar was held by the Amirs of Hail; but before the next European entered, the Turks had garrisoned it from Madina.

³ Qasr al Yahudi, the ancient Citadel or Husn, is the principal feature of Khaibar. It is doubtless the site of the fortress of Al Kamus with which Muhammad dealt in 628. Doughty's sketch and two little pictures inset on to Huber's map of his 1879-81 journeys, here reproduced, are the only indication we have as to its appearance and its very curious surroundings. Huber says the pre-Islamic name of the Qasr and the oasis was *Marhaba*.

⁴ We know of three valleys trending southwards from the Khaibar Harra, the Suwaidara, the Shaqra and the Hanakiya, all of which are crossed by the Pilgrim route from Iraq. It would appear to have been a long day's journey for Guarmani, but the actual route that the Persian pilgrims took varied according to circumstances. For instance, Doughty records that the Haj, which used to pass through Buraida and Anaiza in Qasim, had for years before his visit come down through Jabal Shammar under the protection of Ibn Rashid. Thence "not all years journeying by same landmarks, but according to that which is reported of the waterings which are wells of the Arab, and of the peace or dangers of the wilderness before them. Ibn Rashid's Haj *have been known to go near by Kheybar* . . ." Guarmani's statement is clear enough—he skirted the difficult Harra, crossed the Pilgrim route, and two days later arrived at the Jabal Tayy, the whole distance from Khaibar being about 150 miles, an easy three days' journey.

which I preferred, for I avoided those loose slabs of basalt which had so alarmed me two days before.¹

I was now in the Ehteim country.² So far I had not met with any of their encampments. We slept in the open air. The nights which had been so cold were now just fresh; and as there was plenty of dry fodder for the fire, camping out was bearable for persons of a far weaker constitution than mine.

After twenty-two hours by road over the plain, always bearing towards the east (3rd and 4th March), we reached the Gebel el-Taeie³ after a thousand twists and turns amongst the isolated basalt hills, which at one time had been part of the Harre, and amongst other less rugged granite

¹ The Khaibar Harra, a lava tract of great expanse, and the bulk of it of probably comparatively recent origin; hence its difficult nature. It may be of as recent eruption as the thirteenth century. Our only other authorities for it are Doughty and Huber, and their information only relates to a small area in the northern section. The limits of this volcanic region are, as Guarmani repeats (p. 82), from Jauf Wuld Sulaiman to the Hijaz, or as Doughty says in greater detail, it "lies between north-west and south-east four days in length; and that may be, since it reaches to within a thelûl journey of Medina, an hundred great miles. The width is little in comparison, and at the midst it may be passed in a day." It is actually the back-bone of this part of Arabia, the watershed between two great drainage-systems, which trend respectively to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Its greatest altitude is about 6000 feet. Here are the highest sources of the great Wadi Rima and of the, not much inferior, Wadi Humth. Above the lava-field rise volcanic craters, sandstone outcrops, and even limestone caps above the sandstone.

² *Ehteim*, Hutaïm. This apparently insignificant statement goes to prove the reliability of Guarmani's narrative. He would not, in the ordinary course of events, have met with the Hutaïm before this, but on the eastern flank of the Khaibar Harra he was unequivocally in Hutaïm territory. He could not have gathered this fact from any previous writer. They are Badawin of inferior status, like the Shararat, and have a wide range over Arabia, but their main *dîra* is here between Madina and Jabal Shammar.

³ *Gebel el-Taeie*. The only other traveller who had passed this way, Sadlier in 1819, made no reference to these mountains. But Burckhardt, in recording an itinerary for caravans passing between Madina and Qasim, mentions the mountains called Tayye, in the region between Mawiya (Sadlier's Maweeah, Burckhardt's Mawat) and the Wadi Rima. Philby has recently proved their existence under the name of Jabal Alam, thus confirming what Doughty had already seen from afar—"the blue coast of some wide mountain, El Alem"; he had sighted them from nearby Sulaimi, a distance of thirty-five miles. Huber says the mountains are eight hours south of the Wadi Rima, that they are Hutaïm territory, and full of ibex, which one can well believe from Guarmani's description of their rugged nature. He mentions wells called Bedan (doubtless after the ibex) dug by the inhabitants of Ghazala. For the unknown region to the north, see Huber's *Journal*, pp. 106-7, 113-14. The true Jabal at Tayy are the twin ranges of Aja and Salma, named thus after the ancient and noble Tayy clan, who occupied them before the arrival of the Shammar. *Hatim Tai*, of Omar Khayyam, was the hero of their lavish Oriental hospitality.

formations, divided in the same way by sands from the mountains of Neged. El Bueir, a small hamlet inhabited by sedentary Ehteim,¹ was six hours distant on the north-west.

We spent the 5th, 6th and 7th of March in the Taeie at an Ehteim encampment, where we found about a thousand Ehtebe Beduin tents of the Ruga sub-tribe with one of their great sheikhs,² Meflak-eben-Sfuk. This was because the Emir Abdalla, son of Feisal-eben-Sehud, who had forced these Ehtebe to seek refuge with the Ehteim of Taeie, occupied a position with his army on the heights which divide El-Meskeb from Sarrieh,³ and had thus cut their communications with the other tribes in the south.

Much to my regret, I decided it would be wiser not to visit them; yet, being of an obstinate nature, I cudgelled my brains to see what I could do. I resolved, before definitely abandoning my project, to throw in my lot with these Ehtebe and share their adventure. It is true, I risked being shut up for months in the gorges of the Taeie; but I might also hope for an armistice or peace, which would open the way for me to Southern Arabia.

On the 8th I presented myself before the Sheikh Meflak and made known my decision. At first he endeavoured to dissuade me, finally agreeing to receive me on condition that at least one of my Ehteim should remain with me. Both were easily persuaded to stay. I had a sheep killed and roasted, and I declared that the Ehtebe should never be held responsible for my blood were I to be slain by their enemies.

Before evening the Sheikh of the Ehteim came on a dromedary to our camp and dismounted at the tent of Sheikh Meflak; he came to warn him that he must quit the Taeie the next day at dawn, that he would not be allowed to remain any longer, and that the order was sent by the Emir Abdalla. My fear of a blockade vanished. The camp was broken up during

¹ *El Bueir*. Whether really populated by Hutaim or whether, like its neighbouring oasis Hayat, it had a strong inbreeding of Hutaim women, as Doughty records, we do not know; but the Hutaim are sedentary as well as nomadic, and they own lands in outlying Shammar villages, such as Mustajidda. We have no other record of this settlement, unless it is the *Basir* of Ritter, and Sadlier's Bajeer. Philby doubts its existence to-day.

² *Ehtebe*, *Eteibe*, *Ataiba*, the most powerful tribe in Central Arabia, always a thorn in the flesh of the Wahhabis of Daraiya and Riyadh, and also of the Amirs of Hail. They actually defeated (and wounded) Saud Ibn Saud some years later, in 1870. *Ruga*, *Ruuqa*, is one of their two great divisions.

³ *El-Meskeb* and *Sarrieh*. Misqa, Doughty says it is a poor corn settlement, without palms; it lies to the north-west of the main route between Qasim and Mecca, about 120 miles south-west of Anaiza. Dhariya, Doughty's *Therrieh*, is about twelve miles farther south, and is a station on the Darb as Sultani.

the night. The horsemen, to the number of two hundred, headed the march, the women and children with the flocks and baggage were in the centre, while the rearguard was composed of seven hundred riflemen on dromedaries.

For four days they marched day and night, resting only a few hours at intervals, without even pitching their tents, and being continually attacked by Neged horsemen of the Emir Abdalla and by the Beni-Kahtan.¹ We tried in vain at several points to break the enemy's ranks, or to turn their positions. By the evening of the 12th we had lost all the flocks, had sixty dead and two hundred wounded, and found ourselves back at our former camp in the Taeie! The Emir's army was encamped in the plain to the south-west.

The night of the 12th-13th the Sheikh Meflak led his tribe into a deep gorge close by; placed his riflemen, all on foot, amongst the rocks which formed an impregnable position on all sides except to the south-west—the enemy's front, where was the small opening which formed the gorge guarded by Meflak's cavalry.

On the 13th the Beni-Kahtan made a demonstration on horseback within gunshot of our own men without inducing us to accept their challenge. On the 14th, the Emir Abdalla attacked us on all sides and was victoriously repulsed. On the 15th he commenced the attack in person with all his forces, about 10,000 men, and he did not retire until two hours after sunset, but without having either dislodged us from our eagles' nests or having broken our brave cavalry.

Towards midnight the war-cry of the Ehtebe spread terror in Abdalla's camp. The Sheikh Sultan-eben-Rubean,² chief of the Ruga, accompanied by four hundred horsemen and five thousand riflemen on dromedaries, had surprised the men of Neged and were slaughtering them. Our troops hastened to add to their confusion. The battle lasted till morning, when the Emir Abdalla, abandoned by the Beni-Kahtan,³ fled towards the

¹ See below.

² *Sheikh Sultan-eben-Rubean*. Rubaian is the family name of the paramount Ataiba Shaikh.

³ *Beni-Kahtan*. The Bani Qahtan, here met with by Guarmani a long way out of their main *dira*, which is far to the southwards between Asir, the Rub al Khali and the Kharj district of Southern Najd. But there had been movements northwards of sections of the tribe, for Doughty mentions "the intruded Kahtan in El Kasim", and also that others were attempting, unsuccessfully, to pasture in Jabal Shammar. They raided with Ibn Saud, but evidently sometimes played a double game, as in this case, and are accused of being responsible for the temporary defeat of the Wahhabis (see *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, p. 430). Little known, but of very ancient origin, the Qahtan have a bad reputation for treachery and extreme fanaticism.

Cassim without being pursued. The two victors, Sultan-eben-Rubean and Meflak, embraced each other on the field of battle.¹

In this account I might make myself appear like the hero of Cervantes, and win praise or ridicule according to the judgment of my readers, did I not prefer a love for science and truth. I will confess, therefore, that in all the combats borne by Sheikh Meflak's brave tribe my post was in the safest hiding-place in the gorge with the wounded, the women and the baggage! At the most I was permitted from time to time to wander round amongst the horses tethered to the bushes by their fetlocks; and was thus enabled to study them at leisure, not minding the spent bullets which whizzed over my head or fell harmlessly at my feet. My observations were most interesting, for the Ehtebe horses are by far the strongest in the desert. At times I was distracted by the groans of the wounded who were brought in to be dressed and by the cries of the women who received them with joy, and encouraged them to return to the fight as soon as possible, as soon, that is to say, as the dust or charcoal had staunched the blood streaming from their wounds, or as their cuts had been bound up.

The Ehtebe women are worthy rivals of the ancient Himaiar heroines.

My two Ehteim had also been condemned to inaction and never left me for a moment. Had the Emir Abdalla won, they would have been obliged to protect me; it was for this reason that Sheikh Meflak had imposed as a condition of my staying with him, that one at least of my men should remain too, as he could not undertake the entire responsibility for my safety and preferred to share it with the Ehteim tribe.

During the morning of the 16th I bargained for three stallions in their prime; two were dark bay (almost black), and one a bay with black markings. Sheikh Sultan-eben-Rubean would not fix a price, but accepted my offer of a hundred camels for the three.² A hundred camels is usually the price of one stallion, if really well bred. The stallions are regarded very

¹ The neighbourhood had been the scene of another conflict, for it was close by here that the Wahhabi Amir Abdulla gave (premature) battle to the invading Egyptians under Ibrahim Pasha, in 1817, and thus decided the unhappy fate of the 1st Wahhabi Empire.

² Guarmani paid a stiff price, unless they were very exceptional beasts. The best brood mares were valued, according to Doughty, at twenty-five camels, the equivalent of about £150, and these, being hardly ever parted with, have an arbitrary value. Stallions, on the other hand (the Badawin never geld), are always on the market if the price offered is good enough. Ibn Rashid told the Blunts that he traded an hundred yearlings annually to India at £100 apiece, and this was at a date when horses were still in demand, which they are not now. To-day, it would be safe to say, £200 would buy any mare in Arabia.

differently to the other horses belonging to the tribe; they are worth more than the pack-horses; they live in a half-wild state and are never ridden except when the tribe is in grave danger. A hundred camels was, therefore, the third of their true value. My obtaining them at that price was due to the recommendations of the Skur and of refugee Ehtebe whom I had known as a retainer of Talal-eben-Feisal-el-Sceilan; partly, also, to the good offices of Sheikh Meflak, who wished to see me gone as quickly as possible, fearing lest some accident might befall me.

In the division of last night's spoils, some of the sheikhs quarrelled over a light bay horse with a star in front and two white stockings on the hind legs. Sheikh Meflak acted as mediator and persuaded them to give me the animal in question, for having helped to nurse the wounded while imprisoned in the gorge, saying he did not think I ought to be sent away with empty hands. I accepted with thanks.

Sultan-eben-Rubean gave the horses to my Ehteim guides with orders to take them to the grazing lands of Gofeife,¹ on the western frontier of Gebel-Sciammar, and only to give them to me after they had been paid for; otherwise they were to be returned to him through the Beni-Harb.

Although the Neged Princes had made the Ehteim and Beni-Harb their allies, yet they had not succeeded in making them enemies of the Ehtebe. If the Ehteim desired Meflak to abandon the Taeie, it was through fear of compromising themselves with the Emir Abdalla.

When they returned the next time, they pitched their camp a day farther to the north-east for fear of being given fresh orders to move on. The Beni-Harb² had become powerful and had begun to show themselves arrogant towards their chief; they aimed at independence and, whether nomadic or sedentary, they would no longer obey their Sheikh, Saad-eben-Geza, who abode at Gofeife. Of the four hundred horsemen under Sultan-eben-Rubean, two hundred were mounted on mares of their own. The blood-feud which had divided these three tribes was now definitely settled; although enemies in name, they lived in peace, and on the first occasion that two of them rebelled, we find them all fighting under the same flag.

I say flag and not *ootfe*; I do not find *ootfe* any longer in use in the Neged.

¹ See note, p. 49.

² *Beni-Harb*. The Harb hold the region between the Red Sea and the sources of the Wadi Rima. The Eastern Harb, it is true, once paid tribute to Ibn Rashid, but eventually liberated themselves. They were powerful, war-like, unreliable, and incorrigible highwaymen, in those days, but they have settled down to peaceful ways under Ibn Saud's rule.

In Syria, only the Biscir of the Emir Heidal and the Ruola of Sceilan use it.¹

Visiting the field of battle, I noticed that there were no Kahtan either dead or wounded and, moreover, that no Ehtebe accused a Beni-Kahtan of the loss of one of their men. In fact, I remembered that between the 9th and 12th we were not attacked by the cavalry of the Neged settlements, and that it was only the Beni-Kahtan who swept our flanks, continuously shooting, although one might have imagined their rifles to be loaded with powder only, for no bullet ever hit its mark; yet our cavalry kept on the defensive, not being quite sure of the intentions of the aggressors. In this way, the Beni-Kahtan, too near to Aared, took part in the Emir Abdalla's expeditions without harming his enemies; the Ehteim, dependents of Talal-eben-Rascid, a vassal of the Emir's father, declared themselves neutral and tolerated them in their territory, while the Beni-Harb of the Hedgiaz, secretly favoured them. Considering all this, it is not to be wondered at that the Emir Abdalla did not dislodge us from our position when he was ten to one (without detracting from the merits of our own men), nor that he should have had to surrender to half the number of his own army.

Mahomet was right in saying that if the mountain would not come to him, he must go to the mountain. My "mountain" was the Ehtebe of Sheikh Sultan-eben-Rubean. More fortunate than the Arabian prophet, these good Beduin saved me a long journey. My mission had been accomplished more easily than I had dared to hope for. The voice of duty got the better of my ambition to penetrate farther into Central Arabia. Having gained my object, it would have been madness to go farther without a very good reason; all the same I seriously hoped to be able to return on some future occasion.

Fifty camels had been killed. A mountain of meat, *tell el-lakem*, was prepared towards evening for the sheikhs and myself. A "mountain of meat" means a camel roasted whole, covered with *temmen*, a kind of rice brought by the caravans into the Neged from Gezire, cooked either in water, milk or butter. In spite of its size, the *tell el-lakem* was soon nothing but a heap of bones.

¹ *Otfa*, like the *Markab*, a sort of battle-banner, consisting of a wooden cradle, ornamented with ostrich feathers, borne on camel-back. It leads the tribe in battle, and is then occupied by a Badawi maiden, "the living standard of her tribesmen in battle", who inspires the warriors to deeds of valour. According to Burckhardt this ancient custom was dying out, even in his day, and is doubtless now extinct. The last one in use belonged to the Ruwalla.

The Ehtebe departed an hour after sunset. I nearly wept when Meflak embraced me in the Skur manner, and I was left alone with my guides on that vast and bloody plain. The other guide had been gone since midday to find two more Beduin in the Ehteim tents, who were needed to attend to the horses as far as the Gofeife grazing grounds, pastures which are renowned for the *nossi*¹ they produce and where the horses were to remain till I could pay for them.

Jackals, ravens, wolves and vultures were devouring the corpses. My horses trembled with fear. All night I watched and caressed them, leaving them to the care of my companion at daybreak while I went in search of grass; a difficult undertaking, as I had only my rather blunt *kangiar* to cut with. We could not think of letting them loose to graze, for they did not know our voices and we should have had to pursue them with the dromedaries.

As soon as I had gathered four bundles of the grass I knew the horses liked best, I climbed up a rock and from there called to my companion to bring up a dromedary to carry it back. On the north side of the rock was a hollow with a grotto and a big pool in the centre. The water dripped slowly from the roof and looked as clear as crystal. I could not resist the temptation of quenching my thirst; I took the precaution of resting until I was certain I no longer perspired, so there could be no risk, therefore the ills I suffered undoubtedly came from another cause. The taste of the water was so bitter and nasty that I scarcely drank a drop. I spat it out and tried to rush from the grotto, when I was seized with sickness, accompanied by a violent headache and general prostration. I thought I was going to die!² My thoughts flew to my little family and I recommended them and myself to the care of the God one *feels* in solitude. I fell back with my feet in the pool, gradually my limbs stiffened and I lost consciousness. My senses returned with a strange sensation; I was being rubbed with butter. My eyes opened on to a starlit sky; stretching out my hand I touched the soft dress of a woman, who supported me, and was forcing me to swallow some camel's milk. Two other women rubbed my back with butter, which seemed to act as a restorative, then they rubbed my chest and under the armpits, but especially the pit of the stomach. "The water has affected him, the water has affected him", they repeated; and again

¹ *Nussi*, a tall succulent grass, *Aristida Forskallei*.

² Philby, who recently passed close to the Alam mountains, which are the same as Guarmani's *Gebel el-Taeie*, tells me that he "heard something about such a pool in the rocks, though I have not seen it. The discovery of it would go a long way to vindicate Guarmani."

they made me drink and again they rubbed me. I tried to speak but was unable to utter a sound, though I felt extraordinarily comfortable without knowing why; I fell asleep, dreaming that I was in the imperial palace at Pekin, and measuring the foot of his celestial majesty's favourite wife!

When I awoke, the sun was high, and I was surprised to find myself lying on a coarse carpet in a Saleib or Zingani tent.¹ My horses were tethered nearby to strong stakes. The two guides were conversing with other Ehteim outside in the sun. I beheld three women and a little girl seated in a circle near my carpet who were dressed in silk as during the night before, a luxury contrasting curiously with the rags worn by their fathers and brothers and husbands, the men of the family. The women were young and very ugly, the little girl was ugly too, and the men extremely so. Lastly, the Ehteim rivalled the others in ill-looks. In all that crowd my horses were the only things good to look on!

The Zingane not only wore dresses made of half-silk and half-cotton, a fabric of Bagdad, but silver bracelets besides. A sash worn round the waist had two gilt buckles, while many gilt coins adorned their head-dress. The little girl had a tambourine in her hand. The family was composed of wandering minstrels and dancers.

It is said that the Saleib do not permit themselves to travel unless it is necessary; nor to ride on horseback; nor to ask a wife where she has been, even if she has absented herself for months from her husband's tent.

Feeling better, I arose and thanked both the men and women cordially for their care of me and especially my guide, Ali el-Fadaui, to whom I probably owed my life. The poor fellow, not seeing me return, went to

¹ *Saleib or Zingani*. Sleyb, Syrian form of Sulaib, generic form of Sulubi, plural Suluba; or Zingani, Italian for Tsigan, the alternative for Egyptian or Gypsy; of mysterious origin, possibly older than the Semites, and therefore may be a remnant of the indigenous inhabitants of Arabia; anyway, a most intriguing race, about whom little is known by their neighbours, and less by ourselves. Found in small communities and also solitary—as Guarmani found them here—they wander unmolested over the Syrian desert, north and middle Arabia, but are not found in the extreme south. By profession, they trade as tinkers, as wood and metal workers, and as veterinary surgeons in the encampments and the oases, while their skill in hunting wild game is proverbial. Indeed, they have an uncanny sense of country, of direction, and of water.

It would be useless to compare likenesses when dealing with a people with whom legend has been so busy. But the principal characteristics of the Suluba do strike anyone knowing gipsy types in other countries. To mention a few: they are parasitic; feigning poverty, they are mostly well off; despised by resident folk, but are free to go where they will; of unknown lineage, and of no citizenship; skilled in hunting (or poaching); expert tinkers; have curious habits, and bury their money!

look for me after midday; following my tracks in the sand, he found the bundles of grass and went on into the grotto where I was lying unconscious. Not knowing what to do, he climbed up to the top of the rock, whence he descried some donkeys and camels in the far distance, and, returning to the plain, chose one of the four horses and soon reached the Zingani, who made no difficulties about returning with him to fetch me. They found me still unconscious, so they bound me on to a dromedary and, taking charge of the horses, brought us to their tent, where we met the Ehteim with their companion, whom I was expecting. The Zingane women had rubbed me with so much care that my skin suffered no more except from a slight burning feeling.

For breakfast they gave me camel's milk and baked locusts. The milk was, as usual, excellent, but the locusts very tasteless. I only ate two of them.

After my frugal repast I took counsel with the Ehteim. We settled that four of them, three not being enough, should go on to Gofeife, taking the horses across the Harre and the Draaf; whilst I, accompanied by Ali, would go by the longer and far more interesting route through Cassim. I had resolved that, being so near, I would not abandon this plan on any account, because I wished to introduce myself to the Emir Abdalla and, if possible, to his father, Feisal-eben-Sehud, in order to make known to them my intention of returning every year to the Neged.

At *asser* I sent off the horses with the men, while I departed with Ali at *moghreb*, or sunset.

Asser is the hour which marks mid-afternoon. One knows it in the desert by the shadow of a man on the ground; in winter it should be nine feet in length, and in summer nine and a half, measured of course by a man's foot.

We marched for nine hours among the granite hills, which are an easterly continuation of the Taeie Mountains, and four hours in a sandy plain,¹ where we found about twenty Ehteim families encamped. We rested and slept the whole of the 19th, starting again before twilight, still keeping towards the east and only changing our direction if obliged to do so by the roughness of the ground. An hour before daylight, that is to say, after twelve hours' marching, we arrived at a valley which is the beginning of Cassim.²

¹ This probably refers to the *Arai*j, or sand belt, which we know runs in a broad strip along the western confines of Qasim. Farther south where the Anaiza-Mecca route crosses the dunes, it is known as the *Arai*j ad Dasam.

² The Wadi Jarir might be said to mark the western limits of Qasim, it is the main right tributary of the Rima.

The village of Dat¹ lay beyond the mountains on our left. I am not sure of the distance, but should say it was three hours off. I enquired of Ali, who merely replied *sea*, a word which means vaguely an "hour"; to a Beduin it implies as much one hour as it does a half-day, the real meaning being "fairly near".

The sound of voices could be heard far away down the valley. Placing our ears to the ground we could distinguish the stamping of horses and other indistinct noises. We thought, and we guessed rightly, that we must be near the Emir Abdalla's camp. For prudence sake we retired for a quarter of an hour and lay down behind a hill till daybreak. When the sun had dispersed the mists which rise at daybreak in hot climates, on damp ground, forming a thick fog which hides the landscape, and, subsiding, creates the "mirage", Ali climbed to the top of our hill and remained on the lookout for twenty minutes. After some time he came down again, saying we had not mistaken and that the flag of the Sons of Sehud was floating over a large encampment of Beduin and villagers an hour *franca* (meaning European) away from us.

Then began a discussion as to what we should say to them, so as not to give rise to suspicions. Ali wished to deny that we had been with the Ehtebe, and we should never have agreed had not forty horsemen unexpectedly sprung upon us and ended our argument forcibly by placing us under arrest.

The Emir declined to see me. Notwithstanding, he asked for my letters of presentation, which he read and returned.

Two hours after midday an Abyssinian with ten horsemen came over and ordered us to prepare our dromedaries and follow. I asked him whither; he replied: "Aneizeh." Had I been inclined to make any opposition this answer would have sufficed. Aneizeh is the largest town in the Neged, and its principal commerce consists in rearing horses bought

¹ *Dat*, so far as I can ascertain, has not been visited by any European, unless Sadlier's "Wells of Uddas" are the same. Sadlier mentions no village, but the locality of his watering corresponds with that in which we know from other sources the settlement lies. Philby thinks the two sites identical. Burckhardt reports it as a "village of Kasym nearest towards Medinah", and again as "the first in Kasym" for those coming up from Holy City. Its position according to Burckhardt is seven hours east of *Djerdawye* (Sadlier) and four hours west of *Rass*. Ritter records it as *Dzat El Djamir*; Huber mentions it (see *Journal*, p. 111), and Euting includes it in a list of Najd town sites (*Inner-Arabien*, vol. II, p. 18). According to their Arabic the name is *Dath*. Guarmani's mention of this settlement is in accordance with what we know of it, and it undoubtedly lay on his direct track between the Tayye mountains and Anaiza. See also Wetzstein, *Zeit. für Allg. Erdk.* vol. XVIII, 1865, p. 455.

by the merchants as colts from the Beduin;¹ they export them to Queit or Korem on the Persian Gulf, whence they are sent to Persia or India. Our guard looked on us as prisoners and never spoke. As we advanced the valley became narrower. Ali, seeing me quite calm, regained his usual good humour and began to relate a fable in which the adventures of a "Consul of the Pigs", an expert who knew all the pigs on earth, presumably the representative of a European nation which shall not be named, was employed to conduct a youth, protected by the fairies, on the tracks of a famous pig, which secreted in his snout the soul of a geni. The fable was of Egyptian origin and dated from Mohammed Ali's invasion of Arabia and that of his more fortunate son, Ibrahim Pasha.

At eleven o'clock the Abyssinian ordered a halt of an hour. He sent us some dates and a small piece of meat; and also permitted his horsemen to come and talk to us and sit round our fire. When we resumed the march he deigned to regulate his horse to the pace of my dromedary in order to stay by my side, showing me he was not the brute I might have fancied him, nor did he allow the conversation to flag till we had reached the gates of Aneizeh. He told me his name was Aneibar, and although a subject of Feisal-eben-Schud he obeyed only Talal-eben-Rascid, Governor of Gebel-Sciammar; his father, he said, had been a slave, but he was a free man. Sent by the Emir Abdalla on a secret mission, he was going back to Kail much displeased, for the Emir's "hands were closed to good things!" He told me further that the Emir Abdalla spoke of me in the letter he was taking to his master, and, although he did not know what he had said, in any case I had nothing to fear, for Talal-eben-Rascid boasted of being a faithful servant of the Sultan's.

From the Emir Abdalla's camp to Aneizeh was a fifteen hours' march to the east, slightly east-north-east. The polar star served as my compass in the darkness of the night. There were hills on each side of us, and the ground was sandy till we reached the plain of Aneizeh, where small villages are scattered on the surrounding hills, in the centre of which is the town.²

Before going to the Governor, Aneibar chose for our *menak* the house of the Emir Zamel, the bitterest enemy of the Derreieh princes. At the

¹ Doughty has a good deal to say on the subject of the Anaiza horse-market, which corroborates Guarmani.

² The mention of hills around Anaiza would appear inaccurate, but as Guarmani approached from the west he was probably travelling down the bed of the Wadi Rima, and the rising ground on either bank was "the hills on each side of us". There are many small outlying settlements to the west of Anaiza, according to Doughty.

time I was surprised, but now I am so no longer, since I understand the aspirations of the Neged people and their sheikhs. The Emir Zamel, believing me to be a Mussulman and a Turkish official, paid me every attention. Owing to his intelligence and agreeable manner his influence in the town was greater than his cousin's, the Governor. He had a beard and moustache and very thick hair; he was well built and of medium height and looked about fifty-five.¹

He discussed his plans for reform with me for some time, explaining his desire to see the Neged people once more independent and of the true religion, the religion of Abraham. His hatred of Feisal-eben-Sehud was very evident, nor did he even attempt to conceal it in public. He was much grieved that the Emir Abdalla, believing me to be a spy, as Aneibar assured him, should have driven me away from his camp, and sent me guarded as a prisoner to Kail. I gathered from his conversation on the geographical and political state of the Neged that this very interesting part of Central Arabia was naturally divided in two sections by the district of Uescem, which is wrongly named one of the seven Negeds, being a territory comprising few small inhabited villages. It is surrounded by plains, overrun indiscriminately by all Beduin tribes, for it is looked on as neutral ground; it is ungrateful soil, nor can water always be found there. The Uescem is traversed by the Uedi-Sar;² the mountains which form a barrier to the north limit the frontier of the Northern Neged; while, beyond the mountains to the south, begins Southern Neged, consisting of A'ared, El-Harik and El-Hassa.

Northern Neged or Gebel-Sciammar, Cassim and the Sudeir would not hesitate, should the Emir Zamel's plans fail, to join the Eben Rascid family. The star of the sons of Sehud is rapidly setting.³

The Cassimians nearly all shave their moustaches and their heads. The Emir Zamel shaves nothing "given him by God", and allows his hair to

¹ Zamil al Sulaim, the local Amir of Anaiza, was then about thirty-five years of age. He was destined to great fame in Arabia, being the champion of his city's independence, which indeed retained its freedom longer than any other oasis from the yoke of Hail or Riyadh. He it was who befriended Doughty ten years later, and to whom he appeared "a good gentleman" even to his enemies. He was finally killed in battle in 1891, when the House of Rashid temporarily asserted its power over all inner Arabia.

² *Wadi Sar*, *Wadi as Sirr*, is a remarkable depression which lies across the middle of Washm, to the west of Shakra, between the sand-belts, Nafud or Araiij as Sirr and Nafud Shaqaiqa. It appears on all maps from about 1850 onwards. It is called by old geographers "the Wadi of Weshem".

³ It set at the battle of Mulaida in 1891, but was in the ascendant again within ten years.

grow, as do most of the Beduins, dividing it crossways into four plaits; a handkerchief folded under the *keiffieh* hides them from view.

Profiting by the kindness of the Emir and Aneibar I got them to take me to the horse-dealers. I saw only colts. The horses had all been sent to Queit a few days before. The dealers were in a state of agitation, as an order had come out forbidding the export of horses by sea; the order was supposed to emanate from the Sublime Porte or, according to some, from the Pasha of Bagdad through Eben-Schud; while others, better informed, thought the order came directly from Eben-Schud. In consequence, the inhabitants of Aneizeh were confronted with the loss of a most important branch of their commerce.¹

To please me, Aneibar delayed our departure till the evening of the 22nd. I could not induce him to travel by day, for he said that in that season the sun was dangerous. In Palestine the March sun has more victims than in any other month of the year.

It is preferable to travel by night in Central Arabia, for this reason. Distances are counted by nights and not by days. For instance, when one says a five-nights' journey, arriving on the sixth, the six nights must always be calculated on their average length during the year, and not five and a bit on the average of that season. This manner of calculation shows that it is impossible to do it in less time, however long the nights may be, at the regular pace of a dromedary, counting the usual halts.

Several times I had asked to be shown the exact position of Breda, Bereda or Bereida, as the ancient capital of the Cassim is named, and whither we intended to go. They always pointed to the north; in fact, when we departed on the 22nd we travelled for several hours towards the north, but as we drew near, the pole-star was on our right. This experience made me more cautious in believing the directions of the natives, who frequently make a mistake by not taking into consideration the twists of the road, counting only the first or last part traversed.²

On the 23rd, before *asser*, we entered Breda, a town much spoilt and full of ruins, but nevertheless inhabited by richer princes and merchants than those in Aneizeh. The horse market is its superior in numbers though inferior in quality. The Aneizeh colts come from the Beni-Kahtan; the Breda ones from the Meteir. The Emir Zamel, when telling me this, ex-

¹ The horse traffic was still in progress at Anaiza at the time of Doughty's visit.

² Buraida is, as a matter of fact, almost exactly due north of Anaiza, but the road goes slightly east of north for two-thirds of the stage and turns west-north-west for the remainder; this detour is made in order to avoid a belt of sand-dunes.

plained the inferiority of the latter by a proverb: "Men from the north: horses from the south."

At *asser* we left for El-Aiun, which we left again for Guara at ten o'clock at night, whither we arrived next day two hours before midday. The rest of the 24th and all the 25th we stayed at Guara, having been warned that several hundred Meteir were on the Ghafeh track, so we did not enter that village until daybreak on the 26th, and left it after midnight, only allowing ourselves eight hours to reach Fed, a small village, believed to be the oldest in the Neged or on its frontiers.¹ It is situated in a long valley dominated by two ridges of hills on the east and on the west. The western ridge is a part of that which borders the Uedi-Selma on the east. We rested four hours and, after another six hours through the mountains, we arrived at Tabe in Gebel-Sciammar. Three hours off to the south-west of Tabe the Emir Bender was encamped. He was the eldest son of Talal-eben-Rascid and had three hundred slaves with him to guard about five hundred thoroughbred mares out at grass. Some were put to special stallions each morning and were immediately separated from the rest and sent to grazing lands near the towns and villages under the Emir Talal.

Aneibar suggested a visit to young Bender.² Nothing could have pleased me better. I accepted gratefully, and the good fellow woke me two hours before daybreak so as to arrive at the encampment of the prince's son at the time of the "covering".

No sooner did the slaves perceive us than they fired a few shots to warn us off, no one being permitted, as Aneibar informed me, to go near the mares for fear of the evil eye. The slaves seeing we paid no attention to their eloquent rebuke, came yelling and shaking their *nabbuts*³ at us. Aneibar laughed in return, and they soon recognised him and treated him with much deference, kissing his hand and congratulating him on his return. The young prince, when informed of his arrival, sent for him to

¹ Faïd, a small village now—Huber reckoned it at about forty houses—but of historic association, for it was once the capital of Jabal Shammar. It may be very ancient, as Guarmani suggests, for Doughty hinted at inscriptions having been found there, bearing the same (Aramaic) characters as those found in Taima, one of the oldest settled sites in Arabia. Wallin records that he heard of the existence of the remains of very old aqueducts at Faïd.

² Bandar, eldest son of Talal ibn Rashid, would have been thirteen or fourteen years of age. He did not succeed in the normal course of events, but by his brother's successful assassination of their uncle, only to fall a victim eventually to the blood-feud they had incurred; the whole family being "butchered in cold blood to forestall the blood-feuds of the future" by another uncle, Muhammad.

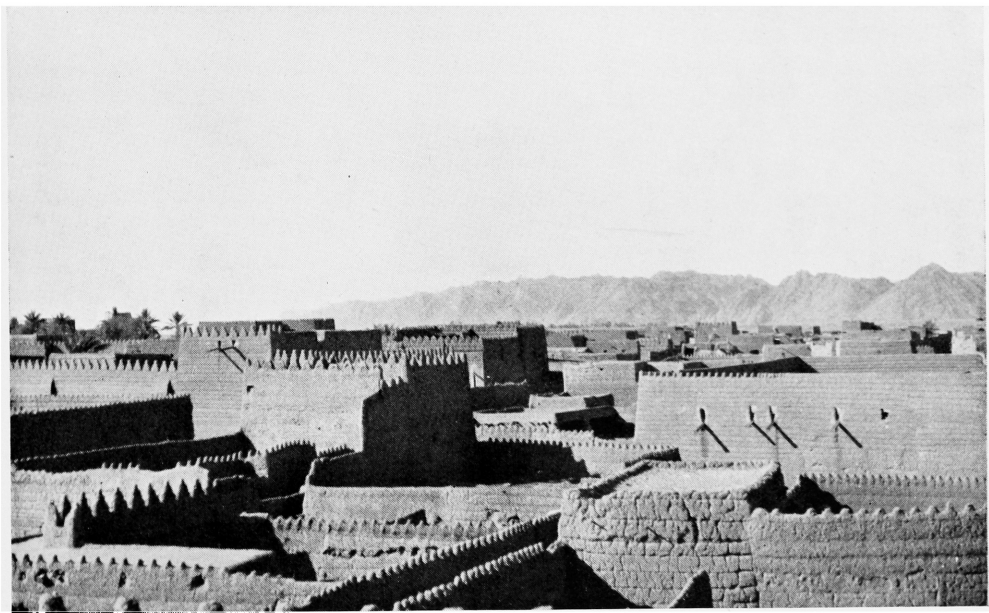
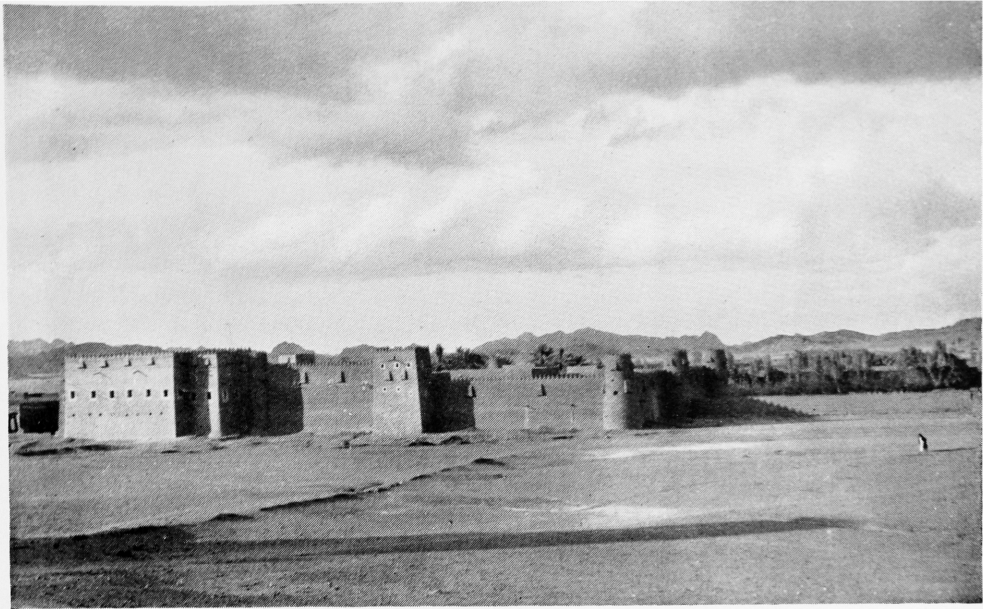
³ "*Nabût*, quarter-staff of the Hejâz Arabians" (Doughty).

his tent, and after five minutes' talk with his father's faithful servant, he invited me to enter, saying, with much courtesy, that an official of H.E. Fuad Pasha should expect civility from the princes who wield the sword for the Sultan and consider themselves his slaves; further, that his father, far from seeking freedom, thought himself honoured in serving the Government. He was surprised at my refusal to smoke and enquired laughingly if it was "because the Uakabite exists no longer in the Neged", the princes of that sect having invaded Constantinople! He would not help himself to coffee before me, and, as I refused, he took the *findgian* from the slave's hand and personally offered it me. When the coffee was finished, he had my beard scented and persuaded me to stay three days in his tent, telling me he was sent for by his father to Kail and would like to present me to him himself. He chaffed Aneibar about having accepted the office of policeman over me, and that if I had been a spy, the faithful subjects of the Sultan might well be proud of me.

Aneibar left after dinner. Ali had stayed on at Tabe. On the 31st we left for Seban, passing Tabe in order to pick up Ali. After sunset on April 1st we entered Kail.

At the gate the corpse of a Persian Jew lay rotting, he having been massacred by the populace for pretending to be a Mussulman and then refusing to repeat the formula: "God and the Prophet." The unfortunate man had penetrated into Neged from the Kammad to buy horses for H.M. the Shah of Persia. If his fate was a sad one, it must be owned he had deserved it. When a man decides to risk himself in a great adventure, he must use every means in his power and be prepared to suffer all consequences of the enterprise. His death was believed to be my own both in Palestine and Egypt; the news reached Teime and spread to Tebuk and the other caravan stations of the Mecca pilgrims! The news was known at Cairo, where Monsignor Samuel Gobat (the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem) was; and our Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem, S. E. Monsignor Giuseppe Valerga (brother of the celebrated Father Leonardo, one of the most distinguished prelates who have worked in the Holy Land during this century), was advised of it when in Alexandria. My poor family were informed through the tactlessness of a friend, and mourned me in earnest, whilst all the time I was in excellent health, eating *pilaff* or *temmen*, and making my *rikat* to God in my heart, but to Mahomet with my lips, in all due reverence; and, remembering Christ's Sermon on the Mount, not to mention the stench of that Jew's rotting corpse, I was determined not to be amongst the poor in spirit and enter Paradise with the fools.

Dismounting from my dromedary at the door of the mosque, in the



HAIL, with JABAL AJA in background
(By kind permission of H. St J. B. PHILBY)

square which separates it from the prince's palace, I went in with Bendar to say seven *rikat*, not having prayed during the day. The *mihrab* was turned to the south (and not in the direction of the "Kaaba"), like all those I had seen hitherto; this was not from ignorance but from custom. In the neighbouring provinces it was believed that the central niche, originally meant in the Syrian villages to indicate the south (*keblek*, pronounced ordinarily *kiblak*), could not be turned in any other direction.

Bendar, having finished his prayers before I had, went outside to give some orders; he came in again whilst I, turning my face to the right and left (the mosque was empty) stroked my beard and murmured the *salem aleikam*. On leaving he bade me good night and begged me to follow his slave, Mahbub. I crossed the square with my inseparable Ali and entered the prince's castle by a little gateway cut in the great door of the central gate which was shut during the night. Mahbub conducted me to the coffee hall, which was about fourteen metres long by five wide and six high; the ceiling was supported by a row of five columns, and the grey walls were smudged over with rude arabesques in white. The fireplace was on the right as one entered, where a youth of about twenty was boiling the black drug. I drank two half *findgians* or small cups, which it is an insult to fill to the brim. I was then led under the arches of a very long narrow courtyard; a slave offered me a *senie* of dates and fresh butter. The dates are eaten dipped in butter, which brings out the taste. I had no wish to return to the coffee hall, so enquired after our dromedaries and belongings. Mahbub replied that, according to Bendar's orders, our dromedaries were in the enclosure reserved for the Emirs and every morning they were to be taken out to graze. Our baggage was already in the house prepared for us.

The Emir Talal had constructed several guest-houses all on the same plan, namely a courtyard for dromedaries and horses, one room with a gateway without a door, for receiving visitors and drinking coffee, and a smaller room for sleeping. The latter has a door made of slabs of palm wood with a lock and key in wood, as used in Lebanon. The outside doors opened and shut in the same way. Each ceiling is supported by a pillar; on the top of mine I carved in an idle hour: "Zulima, 1864"—my daughter's name and the year of my journey.

Should anyone ever follow in my track and wish to find my house, let him cross the square from the great door leading into the prince's castle, to the archway in front of it; he must follow the road starting from this arch until coming to another street leading to the market; my house was the one at the corner, detached on three sides. I found it clean; a good

fire of palms was burning in the hole dug by the door on the left; the room was well provided with mattings, rugs and cushions; a jar of water with a copper cup forming a stopper stood in a corner, and our belongings were hung on the walls.

I woke up early on the 2nd; the Emir's doorkeeper brought me some camel's milk, with fried honey and grapes, advising me to go out and see the country, as I could not see the Emir Talal until after the *asser* prayers. After breakfast I repaired to the market-place and found it very poor after Aneizeh. Many of the merchants were natives of Mesced-Ali, others of Bagdad, Bassora, the Gezire villages, and of the Izak or Arak-Arabi. I went into the shops and spent two hundred true piastres on Ali, for I gave him a new *abah*, a *keffieh* and a white shirt, not wishing to have disparaging remarks made on the colour of his blue shirt such as his tribe wear, and which is usually only worn by women. I say "true" piastres, because in that market the piastre has a conventional value corresponding to seven and a half piastres. Wholesale goods are always paid for in "thaler megidi".¹ In the Cassim it is the same as at Colannati di Spagna. Most of the shops close from ten till three.

Mahbub, who had been looking for me for an hour, conducted me to the same courtyard, as on the previous evening, where I was again offered *pilaff* and *temmen*. Ali shared my repast. I went for a moment into the coffee hall before returning to my house, where I wrote and slept.

The muezzin from the minaret of the mosque (in Neged "meschit") was calling the faithful to the *asser* prayer when Bender came to fetch me to present me to his father. My preparations were not completed before the prayers were over.

The Emir Talal-eben-Rascid² was a man of forty: short, fat and dark, with sharp black eyes and an aquiline nose. He wore a very fine brown Hassa *abah*, a *keffieh-allas* from Bagdad, an *aarkal* tied with silk and gold cords; a dark-green cloth coat and a long white shirt. He had already left the mosque and was holding a tribunal at the door, seated on the western side of the mosque with his chief officials sitting on his left, according to their rank, in rows one behind another. Twenty slaves and servants sat in a semicircle on the ground in front of him, all well dressed in fine black *abaks*, with red or blue cloth coats heavily embroidered with gold; in their hands they held, as did the prince and all his followers, a scimitar in a silver scabbard, which they only buckle on when on horseback. From the other side of the semicircle a poor woman was asking for justice against the governor of the village of Usseta who had taken her ass and, when she

¹ Maria Theresa dollars.

² See Introduction, p. xvii.

asked him the reason, had ill-treated her. The prince gave orders that two horsemen should accompany her to the village to choose the best ass belonging to the governor and give it to the poor woman as recompense for the loss of her own; also as compensation for her ill-treatment at the hands of the governor, he was condemned to buy a *kessue*, or entire new garment. The woman departed calling down blessings on the ruler.

The prince did not rise to receive me. He put out his hand; I touched it with mine, which I then lifted to my mouth, kissing the fingers, and then to my forehead, while he did the same with his, and at a sign from him, and without uttering a word, I seated myself on the ground at his right hand on the step of the mosque.

He got rid of eight lawsuits in two hours, put on his sandals and broke up the court. He then saluted me, smiling, with his hand on his heart, and I did the same, trying not to laugh, for I was not used to a dumb reception. Bendar went away with his father.

Mahbub announced dinner. This time he took me up to the roof over the gateway and spread out a large carpet; a black boy brought a round table a few inches high and two others laid a *senie* on it, with *temmen*, meat and bread. When I had dined I washed my hands, having helped myself, like the Beduin, with Adam's forks.

Whilst I was dining, the Emir's women looked at me through the wooden grating of a window. I thought I could distinguish among the whispers of the women the male voices of the Emir Talal and of Bendar. There is always an occasion in his life when the wisest man forgets himself and unknowingly makes a fool of himself! I descended the steps without glancing towards the harem, pretending to be deaf, and was going to the usual place to drink my coffee, when Bendar ran after me to invite me into his father's private apartments.

The prince welcomed me with embraces and kept me talking about five hours. From time to time he had my beard perfumed and offered me both black and white coffee.

He had heard that my horses were still at Mestegeddeh, where my Ehteim were sheltering for fear of the Meteir, who were harrying the southern frontiers. Bendar requested to be allowed to accompany me and was given permission, it being understood that I first accepted three days of their hospitality. Aneibar was to command the escort of twenty horsemen which the Emir provided, and we were permitted to travel by day. I made no mention of the recommendation from the Emir Abdalla-eben-Feisal.

Until the 5th I could eat, drink, rest and write. I spent several hours

every day in the shops, and always attended the morning tribunal at the castle gate, and the evening one at the door of the mosque. The Emir Talal availed himself of the Gospel precept, "All who use the sword shall perish by the sword." He ordered death for assassins, cut off the hand of those who wounded another in a quarrel; for liars and false witnesses he ordered their beards to be burnt over a fire, which often ended in their eyes being burnt as well; imprisonment was the punishment for thieves; rebels had their goods confiscated. He constantly told me that he held widows and orphans dearer than his own family. His sentences were just and his generosity excessive. When he did not receive me in his own apartments in the evening, he would come to the coffee hall for an hour, where poets of Cassim improvised verses in his honour. He gave a poet of Eben-Sehud, one blind as Homer, a complete suit of clothes, a hundred megidi, a dromedary and a horse, all for a poem ending with this line:

"And Eben-Rascid has all Neged with him."

Passing through Gofar we slept on the 5th at El-Gazal and arrived at Mestegeddeh at three o'clock in the afternoon on the 6th. The Governor told me my horses were at the Roda pastures. The next day, at Roda, I was told they had left that night for Mestegeddeh; I returned immediately and found them in excellent condition. Good news awaited me; the Meteor had retreated beyond the Uedi-Selma,¹ so that I could safely send the horses to Gofeife. I went with them on the 8th as far as El-Saleime, then leaving them to follow up the pasturage until reaching their ultimate destination, I departed with Ali to rejoin Bendar and Aneibar, who had gone direct to El-Gazal. At El-Kasser I thanked them for their company, and, as they were going to the Gofar, I stayed on for a couple of nights, the 9th and 10th, because I wished to go to Mocac and Teime before returning to Kail. Bendar left me a letter for the Emir Smoekan-eben-Mesceir, Governor of Mocac, ordering him to provide me with an escort and food.

On the 10th I rested a little at Lezzram,² stayed till *asser* at Mocac, and continued my way to Gofeife, being anxious to see that my horses were all well.

Gofeife is in a wide plain close to the mountains, where in another

¹ We know of no Wadi of this name, but from what he says on p. 43 one would gather that he uses it for the drainage immediately to the west of Jabal Salma, or possibly, like Palgrave, for the whole plain (Batn) between the two ranges of Salma and Aja. As it was used by the Persian Hajj, it would naturally be infested by marauding Badawin.

² Lazzam is noted by Huber as one of the four ruined quarters of Muqaaq.

twenty years many villages will be found, isolated houses being already built, wells dug and palm trees planted. The plain was a great green carpet and the *nossi* about two feet high.¹ My horses were loose, with their fore-feet hobbled, but were never allowed out of sight by their guardians. The horses grazed by day and were taken to the village at night.

On the 11th I stayed four hours in the plain with my men and then went to Bedan, a new village, called equally El-Bedie, as El-Haianie is called also Henakie. This last village is to the north of the Gebel-Sciammar, so it is to be hoped that the first name will be adopted, there being another Henakie in Central Arabia in the Beni-Harb territory.

At Bedan I was enabled to get my provisions without having to depend on the generosity of the Sheikh of that town, and on the morning of the 12th I turned my steps towards Teime. Only Ali went with me. I had brought sufficient provisions to be able to sleep where I chose at sunset, nor did I desire an escort, so as to be free to draw a map of the road and to study the country. At that time the camps of the Sciammar, Uld-Suleiman, and the Aleidan were to be met everywhere. Any danger from enemy Beduin incursions was unlikely; the Nefut on the north and the Harre on the south rendered this ancient territory of the Beni Tai very safe. The only danger to be feared was from some solitary brigand, but as we were well mounted and better armed, this gave us no anxiety. We should have known well enough how to defend ourselves, as in our wandering life we had often had to depend on ourselves and God.

After thirteen days, that is to say, on the 24th, I returned again to Bedan with Ali, Mohammed and El-Dreibi, going by the same road in order to be certain of having nothing to rectify on my map and in order to add to the notes I had already made of its physical features.

El-Dreibi had grown fatter, Mohammed was recovering from bad ophthalmia. An old Teime woman had cured him of it first of all with *kohel* and then with the steam of a broth made out of the head and feet of goat boiled with the hair on, a custom generally adopted in the desert for all illnesses of the eyes, and particularly for *amaurosi* or gout. The patient is held over the cauldron directly it is taken off the fire, and covered up in two *abaks* until the steam has gone. In the Belka mountains the steam of boiled laurels is also used.

On the 25th I had the horses brought to Bedan and paid for them, receiving a declaration to this effect from the sheikhs who witnessed the

¹ *Gofeife*. The little oasis, where five or six families dwelt, seen in the distance by Doughty, and visited by Huber, is in a low ground and may well have good pasture in the vicinity.

payment; I then paid the Ehteim who had looked after the horses, giving them enough to make the men grateful and happy, and, without forgetting Ali's well-earned reward, I dismissed them all. On the 26th I engaged two Sciammar horsemen from the Emir to replace the Ehteim, and taking the horses myself as far as Tueie, I sent them on with the men to await my arrival at Gobbah.¹

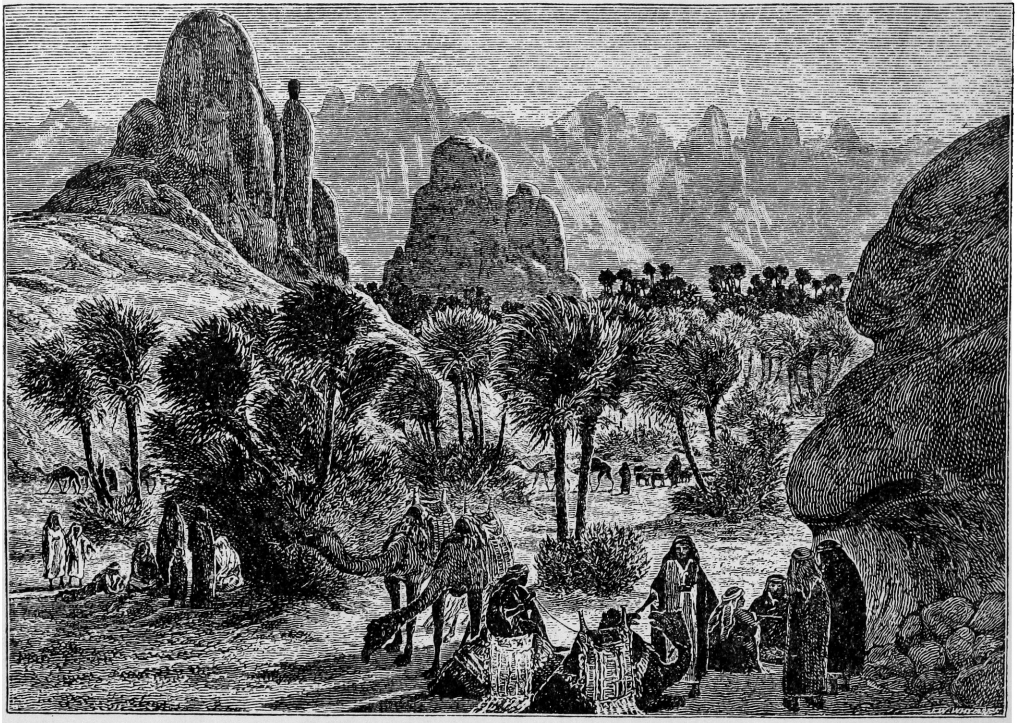
At Tueie we found the inhabitants engaged in gathering up locusts which they had roasted in deep holes in the sand. I bought four sacks full and packed them on Mohammed's and Dreibi's dromedaries.

The locusts which bring terror to the hearts of the agriculturists are a very valued source of supply to the inhabitants of Neged. Their flights across the sky are watched by many anxious eyes and they are followed wherever they settle; holes are dug in the ground, wherein they are roasted with all celerity. Experience taught me that locusts are not to be recommended as food for man, in spite of enthusiastic remarks to the contrary made by the greedy Orientals. When roasted they are tasteless, and when boiled they become watery, although for horses they are as good as oats. They fill their stomachs and increase their muscle without making them fat. If dried and made into powder, a small amount forms abundant horse-food, and in this form it can be kept for years, even if exposed to damp.

Mathieu de la Drome, the celebrated weather prophet, said in one of his almanacks: "the earth gives back what it is given." Locusts are even more productive than the earth, for they give back far more than they take; in an equal weight a measure of locusts is as good as two of barley, and they can be collected on a space which would not produce one-fifth of the weight in oats. It is not advisable to imitate St John's example in the desert, who instead of eating wild berries (which probably abounded in his time though they do not do so now) broke his fast with locusts. But rather should the traveller have them gathered and buy them (after the legs and wings are taken off) at the price of barley. The peasant reaps an immense harvest from this plague of Egypt, and if it is not as good as a rain of quails, it will still be a rain of gold, and he will bless his Creator as much as he cursed Him in his heart in earlier years when, not understanding their worth, he beheld them settling on his land.

On the 26th I returned alone to Mocac; and on the 27th took a guide to Gofar. About half-way, before climbing for a quarter of an hour over the mountains, there is a grotto on the right hand formed of blocks of granite which had become detached from the mountain by an earthquake, but not enough to hurl them into the valley below. There is plenty of

¹ This would be a distance of about twenty-three miles over the Nafud.



The Fortress of AQDA in Jabal Aja
(*From A Pilgrimage to Nejd, by Lady Anne Blunt*)

water in this grotto;¹ many say it is a spring; others that it is a reservoir of rain-water supplied by subterranean channels; anyhow, the fact remains that the water is always at the same level. The water was clear and pure, but remembering the rubbings I suffered at the rough hands of the gipsy dancers, I was careful not to drink there.

That same evening curiosity led me to get my host, Emir Zeid el-Eksciab, the Governor of Gofar, to take me to Prince Beni-Temim's house (a forgotten hero).² He lives well enough, but he is of no standing in that town of Gofar, which is entirely populated by the descendants of his ancestors' subjects, but who now are beginning to bow their necks under the usurper's yoke.

On the 28th I returned with a certain amount of satisfaction to my little house at Kail; Bender had gone to the village of Bahcaa,³ whither I judged it wiser not to follow; instead, I climbed a neighbouring hill from whence I could see the surrounding mountains, so as to be able to discover in which direction this village lay. Some days later, having occasion to accompany the princes Abd-ul-Rahman and Raschid-eben-Raschid (relatives of the Emir Talal) to see their mares on the road to Bahcaa, and over which we journeyed for eight hours, we reached a mountain after seven hours which was said to be half-way to this same village.

The Emir Talal was making preparation to go on *gazzu*; I was told secretly that he planned an attack on the Scerarat. The rallying-place was to be at Haianie. It was a grief to me to hear that Selim el-Kau'i's life would not be spared, he having allowed some of the rebel families to stay in his encampment.

I went to the castle of Ekede⁴ on the 30th with Aneibar to fetch the arms which are deposited there in times of peace. There were forty camels' loads of them.

The doors of the castle of Ekede are overlaid with sheets of iron. The pathway leading to it from Usseta is in many places no broader than the

¹ Doughty took the same path, probably the only pass over the mountains, between Muqaa and Qafa. He also mentions a grotto. See *Arabia Deserta*, vol. I, p. 581.

² Qafa, according to Wallin, was "one of the chief abodes of the remaining descendants of the ancient Beni Temim". See also p. 89.

³ *Bahcaa*, Baqaa, is not a village but a circular depression some fifteen miles in circumference, with water at no great depth below the surface. Small hamlets and granges almost encircle this *Sabkha*, which once must have been, and on occasion may still be a lake. It is about fifty miles north-east of Hail.

⁴ Aqda, a series of enclosed valleys with one common and very narrow entrance, which has been walled and fortified. They hold extensive palm gardens and several villages, and were used by the Amirs of Hail as a refuge and an armoury.

two hind-feet of a camel. This castle is most probably a place of refuge which the Emir Talal has prepared for future use, in case the star of the Beni-Rascids should wane.

At dawn, on the 4th of May, the banner of the Emir was flying on a pole planted before the gate of his castle at Kail. I had been warned the evening before that I was to accompany the expedition as far as Haianie or Henakie. Although I rose early, the prince was before me, and I found him assisting in the distribution of arms and dromedaries to the volunteers who required them; he gave away about six hundred dromedaries. At ten o'clock a slave seized the banner, vaulted on to his horse and began the march; all the troops, nearly a thousand men, followed him; then came the Emir, with Ali (son of Obeid), his cousin, and lastly Aneibar with myself. Aneibar distributed coins of twenty *paras* to the wives and children of the slaves, who accompanied us for half an hour beyond the town yelling (or as they believed singing) in honour of their great and liberal master.

At El-Ugid the troop was reinforced by three hundred Esslem and Abdeh horsemen; the Dagheret and Singhiara contingents joined us at Lechite, where we passed most of the night. Three hours before daylight we started again, reaching Haianie¹ after sunset, and were received with acclamations from the five hundred volunteers who had preceded us. The following morning I was sent for by the prince, who exchanged my dromedary, which was beginning to lose his hump, for his own; he also sought to make me accept other presents, endeavouring in every way to overcome the diffidence on my part; he placed me under the care of a Sciammari, and a Rueli on the Mascehur side, who were to conduct me to Gobbah and Giof. Just as I was leaving I bought (from a Beduin Ehtebe spy) a young grey stallion of the celebrated *Kebescian*² breed.

El-Haianie,³ being only recently built, can only boast so far of the fort and three houses; it is surrounded by the Nefut sands. I believe it to be another place of safety prepared by the Emir Talal in the event of fortune forsaking him. So many precautions augur no good for his foes; it is evident he is meditating some very daring move; he is a "wild ass".

¹ See Introduction, p. xxv.

² Kubayshan, a sub-strain of the five great strains of known descent.

³ Guarmani's description of this Qasr makes it certain that it is the same as that visited by Shakespear and Gertrude Bell in 1914. It is described by the latter as a small fort with two towers, built by Abdulla ibn Rashid. It was actually built by Talal, not, as Guarmani suggests, as a place of refuge, but to guard the wells against use by non-Shammar tribes. It is on the edge of the Nafud, not surrounded by the sands, and in Huber's day there were four rock-hewn wells.

Fortune will follow his flag! I ask the reader not to think that I wish to insult the prince by calling him a "wild ass". In Arabia the ass is exceedingly intelligent, and the more intelligent he is, the less is he subservient to man; this was the familiar nickname for Merwan-ben-Mohammed, the indefatigable Omeiade sovereign of Damascus.

On the 7th, on entering the town of Gobbah, very tired indeed after a sixteen hours' march in the Nefut,¹ I felt my dromedary beginning to fail under me; in vain I tugged at the halter, the only sort of bridle they have; in vain I dealt him several cuts across his head with the *mohgian*. He lay down preparatory to rolling, shaking and stretching himself like a young boar in the mire. My two companions experienced the same fate. Dreibi and Mohammed, who had come out to meet us, laughed till they were ready to burst, while the inhabitants of the place did likewise. The Sciammari and the Rueli swore like Christians, for the Mussulman rarely swears except in mild terms. As for me, I scrambled off as best I could, laughing heartily and returning their jibes, so as to show I did not mind being chaffed.

It seems we had unknowingly passed over a *meraga* or sand bath for camels. The *meraga* is a great hollow filled with very fine sand; if a camel has lain there it leaves its scent (unnoticeable to man), and no animals of the same species will ever pass it by without lying and rolling in it. This strengthens the joints and afterwards they can go on for many hours without further rest.

On the 9th we left the Gebel-Sciammar for good. I had sold Dreibi's and Mohammed's dromedaries the day before and had bought four camels, ordering their foals to be killed, two of which would do for food while crossing the Nefud, and the others as a little feast for the villagers, who consequently did not make us pay the usual tariff for water, and even filled our bags with dates and butter as a gift.

El-Dreibi and Mohammed were mounted on horses and led the other two; the camels, laden with our light baggage and provisions, followed in single file, led by the Sciammari and driven by the Rueli, to whom was also entrusted the grey stallion. I came last on my dromedary, which was faster but far less good-tempered than the one the Emir had taken in exchange. A white donkey, purchased for my daughter from the Saleib, ran to and fro at will, never straying far from the caravan.

In silence I meditated on my experiences!... The Gebel-Sciammar had at last opened its secrets to Europe, and I was leaving it without having encountered the least trouble, in fact I had received great kind-

¹ See Introduction, p. xxv.

nesses and might also have received as many presents. Mussulman fanaticism is intense in these parts; the return to the old religion, after the defeat of the Uakabites, naturally obliged the inhabitants to show themselves especially zealous so as to prove their sincerity. The customs and habits are of the worst type, the men being dissolute and the women caring only for pleasure and luxury. These women have a bronze complexion like the Egyptians of the Nile villages, with large almond-shaped eyes and flashing black pupils; their hands and feet might well make any bold "lionne" or dainty Parisian "biche" envious; for purity of line their figures rival Praxiteles's Venus of the Medici, or the most graceful creations of Canova and Pradier; their long glossy black hair is oiled with an odourless pomade composed of finely powdered palm bark and clarified fat obtained from sheeps' tails. No doubt this simple and innocuous cosmetic, which gives to the women of Neged such splendid hair, will bring a smile to the lips of sadder and balder Western women.

The girls of Usseta and Ekede are renowned both for their beauty and immorality. They sell grass in the mosque square at Kail, covered by a black *sciambar* so transparent as to be scarcely a veil at all, and this they always contrive to let fall as if by chance when a customer, "sent by the Prophet", pleases them. Their lovers are generally the princes of the various branches of the Beni-Rascids, the good Emir Talal being always ready to shut his eyes and accept an accomplished fact. Even Bender has a mistress amongst these girls. It happens often enough that children are the result; these are never acknowledged by the fathers, but remain with the mothers, who are more the seducers than the seduced; the girls' parents tolerate them and say they are a blessing from heaven. If a father were to ill-treat a daughter about to be confined, he would expose himself to the anger of the princes and runs the risk of being forced to leave his possessions and seek exile; after his expulsion the girl would soon find another obliging "husband".

Everything is arranged by contract. A young man stares fixedly at a girl, who lets her *sciambar* drop on purpose. "Bargain for me", she says; and it is an act of prostitution and not of marriage which is settled. Should the young woman be honest—a rare occurrence—some relative will not be long in appearing to offer her as a bride. The bride's price, if she is not a daughter of a prince or a sheikh, amounts to a few talers; after a month a divorce is pronounced and fresh loves are sought. But if a son is born, directly he reaches a reasonable age the divorced woman, although having passed to many other husbands or lovers meanwhile, sends the boy to the man whom she believes to be the father; he invariably accepts him, for he

can always provide him with dates to eat and a rag to cover him, besides which there is always the prince to appeal to for help. Every evening at sunset all those who are in want of food assemble by the hundred in the mosque square, where they wait till a town crier invites them all to come into the castle, where, even if there are a thousand of them, the prince distributes food to all; he even looks after the distribution himself, so that no one should complain.

It is on account of his immense liberality that the number of Emir Talal's adherents increase daily and that his absolute power, although somewhat tyrannical, is yet approved of. All human beings are liable to some weakness. The weakness of the Emir's subjects consists in over-eating! Yet, how can it be wrong if the Emir himself does the same?

The inhabitants of the Gebel willingly give their daughters in marriage to strangers (even though these may be the simplest of travellers), taking them back when the "husbands" leave, on the condition that should the latter not return within a given period they must consider themselves divorced. It seems an extraordinary fact, but the hold of local customs is so strong that these "widows" are far more easily married off than are the girls. It is a serious question for an unmarried girl to find a husband. First, it is obligatory for certain respectable matrons to guarantee the young lady's virginity. Should they be proved to have lied, the girl is returned to her parents the day after the wedding, and the husband takes back again everything he had given her.

While we were at Gobbah, Mahommed wished to marry a fine young woman of good family. The price fixed by the relatives was fifteen talers for the *kessue*, and ten more for various items. Mohammed, who had plenty of time to waste and a desire to amuse himself, requested to be first shown his future companion, assuring them that such was the custom in his own country. The matrons obligingly acceded to his request, and swore to the girl's virginity; they opened her mouth so that he could see no teeth were missing, they slapped her on the back without causing her pain or making her cough, which proved that her constitution was sound and robust, and, finally, they showed him her bust. This was intended to overcome all prudence on his part; well for him that he resisted temptation and declined her altogether!

The day following my arrival at Gobbah the young woman was brought to me by her mother, who related what had happened, denounced Mohammed as a stupid idiot and said that I must marry the girl in his stead, offering to diminish the price even still more. The good woman was determined to have her either widowed or divorced at any cost. I refused

to comply with her request and sent her and her daughter away to seek a husband elsewhere.

Checking my survey by the mountains to the south-east of Lechite, El-Tueie, El-Haianie and Gobbah, I was able to fix the position of Ghenaa, which is the halting place for travellers between Gobbah and Kail and vice-versa, but which I had no opportunity of visiting. The village, surrounded by sands, is of little interest, and having discovered its position there would be nothing to repay one for the time spent in visiting it.

On the 13th we reached the Kadema quarter of Giof-Amer and lodged with an ex-chief, Sakran-eben-Abdalla. A large caravan had assembled here bound for the Uedi el-Serhan and Hauran villages, where the poorer population of the Giof go every year to reap the corn on those wide plateaux, or to glean, in biblical manner, for the Druses, who although not believing in the Bible, are a proud and generous people and do not forbid them. They also go to reap for the Mussulman, who could not otherwise gather in his harvest, and the birds would take the greater part. The head of the caravan was the Sheikh Degheri-eben-Kamis, *rai* or chief of Kaf. Their departure was fixed for the 16th.

The Emir Talal had arrived with his followers at Scaca¹ on the night of the 12th, meaning to rest there for two days and then to scour the desert in search of the Ruola encampments, which were said to be not far off in the Hammad. He had abandoned the expedition against the Scerarat because these Beduin, who possessed many friends in the Gebel-Sciammar, had migrated to the north before the Emir had left his capital, and were now in safety in the territory of the Beni-Saker. On the 14th I commissioned Mohammed to sell the camels, very valuable animals, which we had milked morning and evening whilst crossing the Nefut and whose milk we had drunk ourselves, when it was not needed for the horses and the donkey. In company with the Emir Ahmud el-Agla I went to Scaca, thinking it diplomatic to present myself again to the Emir Talal as a mark of friendship and gratitude, especially as I was soon about to leave his country, perhaps for ever. This attention on my part seemed to please him exceedingly. I found him encamped outside the town; this time, on seeing me, he rose and embraced me before everyone. I travelled back to Giof at night and got there by dawn.

All was ready for our departure with the caravan. Water abounds in the Uedi el-Serhan; it was for this reason that I had sold the camels, for

¹ Evidently by the Lubba track, that followed by Shakespear in 1914 and probably by Nolde in 1893; it skirts the edge of the Nafud. From Haiyaniya to Sakaka is 200 miles.

their milk is of no use. My dromedary could carry all our baggage without thinking himself overloaded; and we had to make the rest of our journey on horseback. We hired a camel belonging to a native of Etera, who was returning without a load, to carry our provisions and the water we needed for the first day's journey; this native was also to lead my favourite grey stallion by hand.

During the day I visited the town, with which I was already acquainted, for I had been there in 1851.¹ That evening I paid off my two Sciammar and Ruola guides, so that they could instantly depart, one to the Emir Talal at Scaca, and the other to the Ruola Mascehur encampment.

I forgot to mention that it had poured in torrents in the Nefut for thirty-six hours consecutively, from the 11th to the evening of the 12th, and that it was drizzling in Giof on the 15th.

After the morning prayer on the 16th, the caravan, with Degheri at its head, started (with us) towards its destination. On the 17th, relying on our numbers, for we were one hundred and eighty-two men, mostly well armed, we were about to enter the pass through the sand-dunes leading to Bir el-Geraui, when we were attacked by five Beduin mounted on racing dromedaries. Their audacity was a bad omen. Degheri gave orders that our camels should lie down and that the women, of whom there were a good many and several with children, should be placed in the centre; the men on foot formed a ring, facing the daring enemy, whom we imagined to be the scouts of a larger number.

Those five fiends held us up for an hour. Their war-cry was *Aku-Giosa* and *Abid el-Sceilan*—a brother of Giosa's and slaves of the Sceilan. They advanced, fired their volleys—fortunately out of shot—and retired again with the utmost rapidity.

All good things come to an end sooner or later. The impudence of these gentlemen had lasted too long and they were to repent of their lengthy amusement. If they had friends, there had been ample time for them to join them owing to our immobility; several of us thought they were mere thieves calling themselves Sceilan in order to frighten us. In any case it was not advisable to have them near us at night, which was now approaching; so after Dreibi had declared it cowardly not to pursue so small a band of aggressors, twenty of our men mounted their dromedaries and dashed out to fight them. The assailants instantly turned and fled into the Geraui Valley. We then proceeded by way of Scegar, having changed our route in case the five Beduin might be really Sceilan and not mere thieves,

¹ This is the only reference to his previous visit. Even in his book *El Kamsa* he does not refer to it. See Introduction, p. ix.

in which case we ought to come across their encampments on the road between Geraui and El-Mueisari.

Four days had elapsed since we left Giof, and except for the incident of the five Beduin we had accomplished with ease over forty-four hours of our journey, camping by night as I used to do with my companions across the Nefud and also between the Gebel-Sciammar and Teime. On the fifth day we broke up camp before dawn, and by the time the first rays of the sun appeared we had marched about two hours. As the mist lifted, a Scerarie woman observed a numerous host of Beduin on the horizon of the plain to our left. During the next half-hour several others of us were able to distinguish them, and were even able to fix their number approximately at two hundred. Degheri made us bear to the right and in another half-hour we reached a cleft in the basalt hills where we put the caravan into safety. Sixty riflemen mounted guard on the neighbouring heights to defend it in case of necessity. The Beduin approached our position in silence one by one. We counted them, there were a hundred and sixty. Arriving at the foot of the hills they entered a little valley to the north and began climbing up to a point only a little inferior in height to our own; but when they were within shot and before reaching the summit of the hill they were warned by our rifle-shots to halt. They obeyed! Degheri asked them their intentions. They replied that they were Scerarat; that they had heard Talal-eben-Rascid was now in the Hammad, therefore all danger for them was over, and they were returning to their tents.

The Scerarat were a friendly tribe and had nothing to fear from us nor we from them, so our caravan could proceed in peace. El-Dreibi alone doubted their word. Ordering no one to move, including Degheri, until he should return, he took my dromedary and descended into the valley. Halting at a respectful distance from the Beduin, he examined them well, and on getting closer recognised some of them as Scerarat, but to be more sure he invited one of the chiefs to follow him. Then calling to the Scerarat, who were with our caravan, he enquired if they knew him; they recognised him as Dagheman, Sheikh of the Scerarat-Debain; this proved the Beduin had not lied! The caravan then left the hills, in apparent security, and went back to the plains, while the Scerarat occupied the positions we vacated. This proceeding on their part made us suspicious, but it was impossible to turn back. We divided our band into three sections; one in advance, one on the flank nearest the mountains, and the other as rear-guard, and kept a good lookout. The Beduin remained motionless for fully twenty minutes and then followed on our track for over an hour, never coming actually within shot. We could not understand it!

In our caravan were five Scerarat families, two of them belonging to the Debain tribe, the same as those following us. El-Dreibi was a Sakari and therefore sacred to them. The rest of the caravan were natives of Giof, who had always lived on good terms with the Scerarat, yet on account of their following us we were beginning to show hostile feelings.

Our youths marched singing all the time. Some shawls attached to three of the lances served as flags; several of the young men in turn left the line to dance and throw their weapons in the air, catching them before they touched the ground. Degheri spoke not a word. El-Dreibi, still mounted on my dromedary, had assumed *proprio motu* the general command.

Suddenly the Beduin put their dromedaries at a trot and swept round to our left flank, which we promptly defended; then they wheeled round to the front, firing about a hundred shots and accompanying their attack with their war-cry of *Aku-Giosa* and *Sceilan*, as had done our five friends on the 17th, and whom we now recognised in the forefront of their line.

The mystery was explained. We were being attacked by the Sceilan, commanded by Kamed-eben-Beneie. The Scerarat with him had placed themselves momentarily under his lead to make a common cause against Talal-eben-Rascid.

The caravan halted and fought for two hours, though prudently keeping as far off as possible. Our Scerarat took no part in the fray, but lent their arms to the natives of Giof who had none. I myself never fired a shot, not wishing to throw my ammunition to the winds.

It became a farce to continue the battle, for we could never hope for success, having but 65 rifles against at least 140. Finally, Degheri ordered the cease fire, showing that he meant to surrender.

Six of the enemy advanced towards us. We made several propositions which they declined. They said, "friends safe, but enemies despoiled". By "friends" they meant the Scerarat families, Degheri and his people, myself with Mohammed and El-Dreibi. The "enemies" were the natives of Giof, who were to give themselves up.

To abandon our companions would be shameful! Together we had fought and together we must save them. The Beduin were informed of our intentions and that we meant moving on. They went away after having assured us that we should all be robbed if we declined their proposals.

The fight began again and this time within shot. In ten minutes we had two dead and ten wounded. The Scerarat families gave in, the rest lost courage. Thereupon Degheri advanced towards the enemy and throwing his weapons on the ground called out that he surrendered. Meanwhile, El-Dreibi lightened our provision loads, removed halters from the drome-

dary and donkey and jumped on one of the horses; Mohammed and I were already in our saddles. Mohammed held the free horse and the young Serhani mounted the grey. The Sceilan and Scerarat circled round us and with flashing scimitars shouted to us to give up our possessions. As soon as we were at close quarters we put our horses to a gallop, Dreibi, Serhani and I firing on the enemy. They returned it. My horse was hit and fell. El-Dreibi took the led horse from Mohammed and brought it to me; I mounted and began my flight again. The donkey and the dromedary, who were accustomed to being with the horses, urged on by El-Dreibi's voice, tore along at an incredible speed. Thirty Beduin gave chase. Whenever we perceived them separated from each other by the inequality of the ground or the pace of their mounts, we turned to confront them, and they retired until joined by the others, then pursued us again. We continued thus till we reached the Uedi el-Meheder mountains. Once there we considered ourselves in safety and our pursuers left us in peace to go back for the spoils of the caravan.

As long as the sun was above the horizon we stayed in the mountains. When darkness fell, we hid Mohammed and the Serhani with the two horses, the donkey and dromedary close to the Meheder, blotting out our tracks, which could be seen on the ground; then El-Dreibi and I returned to the field of battle. Our companions were still there; the men quite naked and the women in nothing but their long gowns, with their hair loose, for they had even been robbed of their *sciambars*. Finding we could be of no help to them, we left at ten o'clock (at night) and went back to the Meheder where Mohammed and the Serhani were waiting. From Meheder we marched for about four and a half hours and reached El-Adeimat, where we rested a bit, then never drew rein again until we got safely to Kaf, extremely hungry and fatigued.

The caravan reached Etera on the 22nd, in a deplorable state. I went to meet it and distributed fifty measures of dates and assisted the so-called doctor-surgeon of the village to look after the wounded. Four of these unfortunate beings succumbed and were buried in the same grave. Later on I returned to Kaf, in spite of the invitations of those who had entertained me at other times, and now wished to keep me till the following day. The next day saw us on the way to the Hauran. Instead of taking the road leading direct to Orruman in thirty-two hours to the north-west I went round by Scema, although I knew it would take me thirty-eight hours.

At Kaf I received the following news:

Firstly: whilst the Debain were helping the Sceilan to despoil our

caravan, Kamden-eben-Maagel of the Anasi-Mahalef tribe with sixty horsemen had stolen all they had left behind in their own tents, besides seizing their flocks. Secondly: the chief sheikhs of the Scerarat, seeing that with the exception of the Ruola and Beni-Saker all the nomad tribes were armed in *gazzu* against them, decided to go back to their own territory, and therefore a deputation headed by Selim el-Kauï had left to find the Emir Talal, to swear obedience afresh and to pay up the total arrears of the tribute owing to him, in addition to a present, in the hopes of pacifying him and obtaining his pardon. Thirdly: the Sheikhs Settam—a cousin, and Azzak—brother, of Feisal el-Sceilan, accompanied by fifteen hundred Amran, Feddan, Sbaa and Soualma horsemen, had surprised the Mascehur tribe between Gïof and Scaca and had made themselves masters of their entire possessions. Geruh-eben-Mehsen and Ahmud-eben-Hussein were the only chiefs present, the rest having gone with the Emir Talal on *gazzu*; but they succeeded in killing five of their assailants before retreating to Gïof with the women, who, though respected, had been bereft of all their valuables, and also with the shepherds, whose occupation was now gone.

The account of the rest of my journey would be out of place in this itinerary. The notes that filled my pocket-book from Kaf until my return to my family, passing through Damascus, Tiberiade, Nazareth, Genin and Neplusa, may perhaps be published some day in a more important work than this one.

The itinerary through unknown regions starts from Galeite, near the well-known Em el-Rusas, and returns to Galeite by another road, which I followed from Kaf, as I had done in preceding years, by way of the villages of the Uedi el-Serhan and thence by the Hammad.

Here finish these tedious pages of my introduction, which was compiled at the request of my friends, especially of Dr G. Rosen, Prussian Consul at Jerusalem, graduate of several German universities, and one of the most intellectual Europeans to be found in the East.

On my map it will be noticed, and probably criticised, that, unlike modern travellers, I have not indicated in any way the latitudes and longitudes of the places I visited. May this omission be the only fault in my itinerary, for although I might have marked the degrees approximately, I had no means of determining them by astronomical observations. Nevertheless, my map is a sincere bit of work; it will help to rectify many former errors, besides being a help in rendering the itinerary intelligible, and it stands as a proof of my discoveries.

ITINERARY

FROM JERUSALEM TO NORTHERN NEGED

I

IT was necessary to fix my departure for the month of January and, moreover, towards the end of the month. At this time of year the Taamri-Saade, who must escort one to the Beni-Hamide, have their principal *duars*¹ or encampments in the Uedi Alia, near its tributary the Em el-Akereb, half an hour to the south-west of the Greek convent of Mar Saba, and 20 m. to the east of Bir el-Debebe; or in the Begheia, at three-quarters of an hour north-north-east of Kalaat el-Merd, the ancient convent of St Marterios.²

The Taamris owe their origin to the Beni-Hares of the Uedi Mussa in Arabia Petræa. It is related that some Beni-Hares horsemen abandoned their *duar* at a date impossible to ascertain, migrated with their families, and finally settled, after having partially rebuilt the ruins, at Bet-Tamar, an ancient Judean city, about half an hour from Bethlehem. It seems they left their country owing to bloody combats with their own brothers, though not before having tried in vain to effect a reconciliation and thus evade the ban of outlawry.

The new inhabitants of Bet-Tamar rejected the ancient name of Beni-Hares and called themselves Taamri. It is said they were blessed by God on account of their extreme morality. They multiplied rapidly and contrived to make themselves respected by their turbulent neighbours, the *fellahin* of the Ebron mountains.

The Taamri have never been known to betray a guest, or to fail in their given word or a sworn alliance. They decided to go back to a wandering life again after a new fratricidal combat, which one day left more dead than living inhabitants in Bet-Tamar. At present they occupy the land which extends from the Uedi el-Nar on the north to the Uedi el-Deregeh on the south, and from the Uedi Saleh, Ortas and Gehar on the west to the Dead Sea on the east. Although they till the land like peasants, they live in tents like Beduin. Subdivided into three sections, the Saade, Agiaage and Ogaiat, they are all allies, and seventeen hundred riflemen defend the tents. They have only twenty mounted men in all. The Saade division is the strongest, the most influential, the most hospitable and,

¹ See Appendix I.

² See Appendix II.

therefore, the most feared and respected by other nomads. Their alliance with the Beni-Hamide is a very ancient one.¹

The Jordan had to be crossed by swimming it, with the assistance of the Sauakari el-Uedi, at El-Kenu, a point an hour and 20 m. north-east from Ain el-Geir, a brackish spring found in the Gor, half-an-hour north of the Dead Sea. A few of these Sauakaris were added to the escort already supplied by the Taamri. The Sauakaris aid those unable to swim with a water-skin, filled with air, attached to their thighs, and another, containing their clothes, under their arms; besides this, they pass a cord with a running knot round the left arm which is tied on to their own right arm, so that they can tow them, while another swims on the right-hand side, so as to be prepared for emergencies and to support them from time to time.

The Sauakaris—at the present time nomads like the Taamri—were formerly the peasant inhabitants of Bet Sakur el-Tahta in the Uedi el-Nar. It is in this Uedi where they now pitch their tents. Their *Kabile*, or tribe, is subdivided into three parts, El-Scegherat, El-Alhassa and El-Giaafare. They can arm four hundred riflemen, but have no horses except about twenty owned by the sheikhs.

A Sauakari escort is necessary as far as Zerka-Main, so as to avoid danger of molestation by the Aduan, the natives of the Western Belka, the Kaabneh, Baharat, Hauezeme and the Salit, with all of whom the Sauakari are allies.

The Kaabneh are a wretched tribe who claim their descent from the Kaabneh el-Skur or from the Beni-Saker; they are led by the Sheikh Mussa-eben-Fodaleh.

The Baharat have three subdivisions, Baharat, El-Gualma and Suvuaria. Sheikh Eben-Ganem is their principal chieftain.

El-Muezeir, El-Uendie and El-Hameime, are the Hauezeme subdivisions. Their chiefs are Selman el-Muezeri, Eid el-Uendi, and Akmet-abu-Hameme.

The Salit are subdivided into Namirat and Naamin (under the command of the Sheikh El-Gofian), and also into Gerain, Gualme (not of the same origin as the Gualme-Baharat), and Redgelat (commanded by the Sheikh Mehlak-abu-Ergele).

The Kaabneh number 100 foot-soldiers; the Baharat 600 foot and 200 mounted men; the Salit 250 foot and 40 horsemen.

The Baharat and Hauezeme acknowledge the supremacy of the Aduan, united under one leader, Diab, who recruits 300 horsemen and 1,500 foot.

¹ See Appendix III.

The Kaabneh are allied with the Beni-Hamide, and the Salit with the Beni-Saker.

The first day's stop should be at the Taamri camp; the second one at Govueir, two hours and three-quarters south-east from Kenu; but as, even with the escort, the night cannot be looked upon as safe, it is better to continue the journey in order to get into the mountains about a half-hour to the east-south-east, not halting above the spring of Menscela (two and a quarter hours to the south-south-west) except to gain breath, then to go on by way of the Uedi Kamara (1 hr. 10 m. to the south of the Menscela) and not to stop until reaching the Zerka-Main. One arrives there by skirting the mountains from the east-south-east to the east between the Zerkauein, that is to say, a quarter of an hour below the point where the first spring goes underground, and only reappears three-quarters of an hour away towards the west. Here encampments of the Beni-Hamide are to be found for certain.

From the Uedi Kamara to the Zerkauein, three hours must be allowed.

Once the Beni-Hamide are reached, the double escort of Sauakari and Taamri becomes useless. They should be sent back to their own tribes, giving the horses which have served for this first stage into their charge to be taken back to Jerusalem; these must be replaced by others from the Beni-Hamide to take one on to the Beni-Saker.

The Beni-Hamide, nomadic tillers of the soil, have gradually migrated from the low pastures of Arabia Petræa to the heights of the Kerak mountains and penetrated into the Kura. During recent years they have invaded part of the Belka, causing the Baharat and Hauzeme to retreat northwards. On the west their territory is bounded by the Dead Sea and on the east by the plateaux where the Beni-Saker roam. In the Kerak mountains their numbers are on the decrease, but in the Belka they are increasing daily, though the greater number are concentrated between the Mogeb and the Zerka in the Kura. Their tribe is subdivided into the Tueiha, Fuadele, Abadna, and Nada tribes. Their principal sheikhs are: Kaled-abu-Breis of the Fuadele; Hussein-eben-Sciauar of the Tueiha; Soliman el-Gori of the Abadna; and Emsellem el-Derbe of the Nada; they can call up 200 mounted men and 1,000 unmounted riflemen; in war time Kaled-abu-Breis takes the supreme command of all the tribes.

In the early days of February, the tents of the Beni-Saker, or Skur, are but a day's march from the *duar* of the Beni-Hamide, their Sheikhs often going backwards and forwards on friendly visits and on business. One is obliged to visit their camps in company with one of them, not omitting, however, to have a Beni-Hamide guide, or, as he is called, *rafik* (trusted

friend), who is supposed to serve as a protection against possible enemies of the Skur, in case one should meet with any out on a marauding expedition.¹

From the *duar* in the Zerka Valley one climbs the Kura mountains for an hour and 30 m. as far as the eastern slopes, taking a direction 5 m. to the east, where the ascent begins, and after bearing 12 m. to the north-east the former direction is taken again, zigzagging from the east-north-east to the east-south-east. On reaching the eastern slopes, one descends for 35 m. as far as the ruins of Leb, situated on a small hill from whence is seen for the first time, towards the south-east, the tower of the very important ruins of Em el-Rusas; this is reached in 4 hrs. 12 m., and one rarely loses sight of the ruins.

From Leb to Em el-Rusas one must bear 45 m. south-east, and 45 m. east as far as Bir el-Melah in the plain of Meliah; it is 5 m. east-south-east and 15 m. east-north-east to reach El-Akdeia over fairly undulating ground, or rather a succession of low hills, amongst which are hidden the first tents of the Beni-Saker. It is 25 m. east-south-east and 35 m. south-east to reach the Uedi el-Temed, which is crossed in 10 m., and then, leaving it on the left, one climbs in 5 m. the hill of El-Rumel (a ruined village of no importance). From there to the ruins of Em el-Rusas, where the road becomes more level, it is 25 m. to the south, 15 m. to the south-south-east, and 27 m. to the south-east, passing the Beni-Saker encampments, which are scattered in all directions from the north-north-east to the south-south-west.

The Beni-Saker are true Beduin—*Bedu*—shepherds, not Arab or semi-nomadic tillers of the soil. They are divided into two tribes: the Tuha, under Sheikh Fendi el-Feizi, and the Kaabneh, under Sheikh Abdalla el-Acreisce. The subdivisions of the Tuha are: El-Feiz, El-Kamed, El-Zeben, El-Akesce, El-Kadir, El-Dehamsce, El-Dgecaasce, El-Fadel, El-Gaut, El-Emteir, El-Drehen, and El-Scellal. Those of the Kaabneh are: El-Kreisce, El-Dgebur, El-Daham, El-Acheumma, El-Gaialin, El-Kedaa, El-Dicha, and El-Dgehanet. They numbered in the recent wars against the Anasi 2,200 mounted men, and 2,000 riflemen, mostly mounted on dromedaries; besides this, they could call up a reserve force of 4,000 men on foot, armed with swords, pistols, and lances; also they frequently increased the number of their combatants by 450 Serkan horsemen, Beni-Kaled, El-Ahbeb, El-Rasced, El-Ahsem, and El-Hagdel; 350 Serdie horsemen, El-Daker, and El-Vuaked, and by a contingent, almost as numerous, of Beni-Hamide, Salit and Scerarat.

¹ See Appendix IV.

Amongst the nomads it is claimed that the best, that is to say, the most liberal and hospitable, are the Beni-Saker, amongst whom are the Tuha, the Feiz (offshoots of the Tuha), and the Fendi (offshoots of the Feiz). It is towards the tent of Fendi el-Feiz that the traveller should direct his steps.¹

Fendi el-Feizi's tent is to be found, either in the neighbourhood of the ruins of Selia, situated on an eminence 50 m. south of Em el-Rusas, or hidden in a dip of the ground 16 m. to the north-north-east, or at 30 m. south-west, and never more than half an hour's distance from the well which is to be found 5 m. south-south-west of the ruins. Or it may be at about 10 m. from the left bank of the Uedi-Salie (which is 33 m. to the south, slightly south-south-east of the Selia), or again, it may be near the ruins of El-Ram, 30 m. west-south-west from the second point referred to. But sometimes (although it is very improbable, the season not being sufficiently advanced to make a scarcity of water and pasture) neither Fendi el-Feizi, nor any influential member of his family, that is to say, neither Scelasce el-Bakit, the chief warrior of the tribe, nor Eid el-Soliman, who is *Katib* or scribe, is to be found encamped hereabouts. In this case it is advisable to go southwards to the Uedi-Saide, a tributary of the Mogebe, following the left bank of the Salie, which flows beneath El-Aal (the ancient name being Eleale); failing this, taking as the point of departure the camp at 16 m. north-north-east of Selia, turn east-south-east to the Uedi-Suaca (5 hrs. 25 m. distant), leaving the ruins of Em-Setbe 15 m. to the north after 50 m. march, arriving after another 80 m. in the middle of the plain called Sehel-Akial. This is an hour west-north-west from the Mecca pilgrims' route, and an hour and 30 m. from the first hills which border the Uedi-Suaca. This wadi is an hour and 45 m. farther on in the same direction east-south-east and ends 50 m. on at the Galeite, a big wadi where large reservoirs have been cut out of its rocky bed by the Beni-Helal. It is easy to find it by following these instructions.²

One may count on falling in with the Tuha chief on the banks of the Galeite, at the head waters of the Uedi-Suaca.³ The Beni-Hamide should now be sent back to their mountains, together with the horses furnished by their tribe; in place of which, dromedaries should be bought, these being better able to endure the journey across the desert.⁴

¹ See Appendix V.

² *Galeite*. Quleita, at the sources of the Hallufa. This Wadi runs close under Jabal Suwaqa, and is doubtless called after it locally. It crosses the Hajj route at Tuwei, north of Qatrani, and is an affluent of the Mojib. We have no record of rock-hewn cisterns in the district.

³ See Appendix V.

⁴ See Appendix VI.

A small bag of flour, some *maris* or dried *leben*, a small quantity of salt and raisins, enough for a fortnight, must be provided by the Beni-Saker; besides a water-skin for water and possibly a sheep-skin for warmth on cold nights. It is unnecessary to add that all must profess the Moslem faith, and that the dress must be exactly similar to that worn by the Beduin; the Turkish or European dress is not tolerated beyond the Beni-Saker territories, and neither is the Christian religion.¹ The chief of the Tuha or some member of his family will choose the men from his tribe suitable for the escort, and to these must be added, without fail, a Sciam-mari, a Scerari, and an Anasi of the Uld-Ali.

Departing from the Beni-Saker encampment on the banks of the Galeite, the Ard el-Suan is reached in 4 hrs. and 30 m. at the usual pace of a dromedary, eighty-six metres and twenty-one centimetres to the minute. The way winds over hill and plain 2 hrs. to the south, 35 m. south-east, 1 hr. 35 m. south and 20 m. south-west. Continuing over the Ard el-Suan 2 hrs. 45 m. south the day finishes at the Abu-Scerciuh stream, which is full of water up to June. This stream comes, during the winter months, from the east-north-east and falls to the south into the Uedi el-Magar.² Some days after the rains have ceased it has many deposits of water in a bed of clay mixed with fragments of siliceous stone. Along it all the green foods most sought after by dromedaries grow in abundance, *el-scih*, *el-otefa*, *el-retem*, and *atefan*.³

The Abu-Scerciuh can be found without fail, if, on descending the last Belka hills, one marks to the southwards the two isolated mountains standing in the plain east and west of each other.⁴

One passes close to the smallest of the two, that which is situated to the east of the road.

The Ard el-Suan, a land of flint and siliceous quartz, covers a surface of about eighty-four square miles, and forms an undulating plateau with small eminences, covered, like the plain itself, with a layer of bits of silex, which in ancient times must have been united in one immense, fine crustation, but is now broken up by the action of the rays of the sun, the rains,

¹ See Appendix VII.

² *Uedi el-Magar*. Wadi Mughara, local name for the section of the Wadi Hafira near Jabal Mughar. Also called Wadi Segera (? Shajara). It crosses the Hajj route at Qatrani, and eventually joins the Wadi Mojib.

³ *Shih*, *otfa*, *retem*, and *atefa*—diminutive of *otfa*—are all common desert plants.

⁴ *Abu-Scerciuh*—Sharqu, Sharsuk or Sharyukh according to Guarmani's system of transliteration—is not known to us, but 4 hours and 30 minutes would have taken him to the upper tributaries of the Wadi Hafira which is the same as Mughara. The isolated landmarks to the southwards might be the Jabal Farhat and Jabal Raha.

the wind and the sand. At rare intervals, where the action of the elements has been stronger, mounds of sandy earth are met with, where the usual desert plants grow vigorously. These plants are found more frequently in the beds of torrents, or on their banks, and often where the siliceous fragments, especially in the plain, are smaller. There are sand-hills on the south of the Ard el-Suan, and towards the east are mountains with basalt caps. Water abounds in the hollows of the undulating country.¹ This land, having become neutral (no man's land) because it does not produce sufficient pasture, is constantly overrun by numerous bands of Beduin on *gazzu* against their enemies.² For this reason, even though escorted by one or more Skur, Sciammar, Scerarat and Anasi-Uld-Ali, it is prudent to cross this country as rapidly as possible.

At 1 hr. 30 m. south from Abu Scerciuh, one comes to the Uedi el-Magar, running from east to west. Continuing the road for 1 hr. 17 m., one reaches some sandhills, in form like a gently heaving sea and which occupy a great part of the plain. After traversing this for 1 hr. 15 m. the siliceous plateau is again reached, over which one must continue for 2 hrs. 55 m. to the south, altering for 25 m. south-south-east, 15 m. south-east, 15 m. south-west, 8 m. south, 30 m. south-south-east, skirting some hills of flint; once again towards the south for 4 hrs. 16 m. till reaching the foot of the hills which divide this first part of the Ard el-Suan from the Uedi Sciummeri,³ these are traversed from the north-west to the south-east in 1 hr. 52 m. The Uedi Sciummeri is then 35 m. distant (20 m. east-south-east and 15 m. south-east); a westerly course must now be followed. The water in the skins should be changed, and this tiring day of 15 hrs. 13 m. journeying ends in letting the dromedaries graze for half an hour, never allowing them out of sight, and in seeking a shelter for the night in the neighbourhood of the stream amongst the high bushes on its right bank or amongst the rocks close by.

Before dawn next morning one crosses the Uedi Sciummeri to ascend the hills on its left bank for 40 m. south-east, 5 m. east, 25 m. east-south-east, and to descend again for 15 m. south-east, 15 m. south, 25 m. south-east. One then crosses a narrow valley of chalky rocks for 40 m. south-east, whence one enters the Uedi or valley of the Goueir-Mennaa.⁴

The Uedi Goueir-Mennaa takes its name from a steep escarpment of

¹ See Introduction, p. xxxii.

² See Appendix VIII.

³ Wadi Shumari; it drains from the neighbourhood of Bayir, south-westerly into the Jafr depression.

⁴ *Uedi Goueir-Mennaa*. Musil gives us the Wadi Ghuweir as the next drainage southwards from the Shumari.

sandy soil, which buttresses a high plain rising from the Ard el-Suan and continues to the south-east without ever opening into a valley. This high, level plain must once have been united to the Uedi by slopes less steep and with a surface of silex all the easier to break away if in a vertical position.

Crossing a track, generally more sandy than siliceous, for 5 hrs. 55 m., chiefly towards the south-south-east (15 m. south-east, 2 hrs. 10 m. south-south-east, 30 m. south-east, 3 hrs. south-south-east), some low hills are reached, more siliceous than sandy; here the Uedi Goueir-Mennaa ends. Having crossed the hills from north to south for 20 m., until Raz el-Tobeit¹ is discerned in the distance towards south-south-east, one continues for 35 m. south-east $\frac{1}{3}$ south-south-east, and enters again the siliceous plain of the Ard el-Suan, over which the track to be followed is 50 m. south-south-east, 25 m. south $\frac{1}{2}$ south-south-east,² 2 hrs. 5 m. south-south-east again, as far as the stream or Uedi el-Aanab, near a *redgem* erected by nomads to serve as a beacon and meeting-place for travellers.³

The Uedi el-Aanab⁴ rises at the foot of the Raz el-Tobeit and flows to the north-west, making so many curves that one has to cross it several times. Its sandy bed absorbs the rain-water very rapidly, and one cannot count on finding it there at every season of the year. The water-skins should be filled from one of the great natural basins to be met with on the right of the route, an hour and 25 m. from the hills, or 1 hr. 55 m. north-north-west of the Aanab; or they can be filled from the pool which is found 43 m. farther on (28 m. east-south-east, 10 m. south-east, 5 m. south-south-east). There is even a possibility of finding another 1 hr. 10 m. farther on to the south-south-east, amongst the hills which finally end the Ard el-Suan after a fresh curve of the Aanab from east to west. Here a resting-place must be found for the night, after the fatiguing journey of 14 hrs. 45 m., not forgetting, however, first to allow the dromedaries to graze.

A long chain of small, sandstone hills mixed with basalt rocks, with small plains intervening, the ground covered with basalt fragments and plants of *semek*, proclaims El-Tobeit from whichever side it is approached.⁵

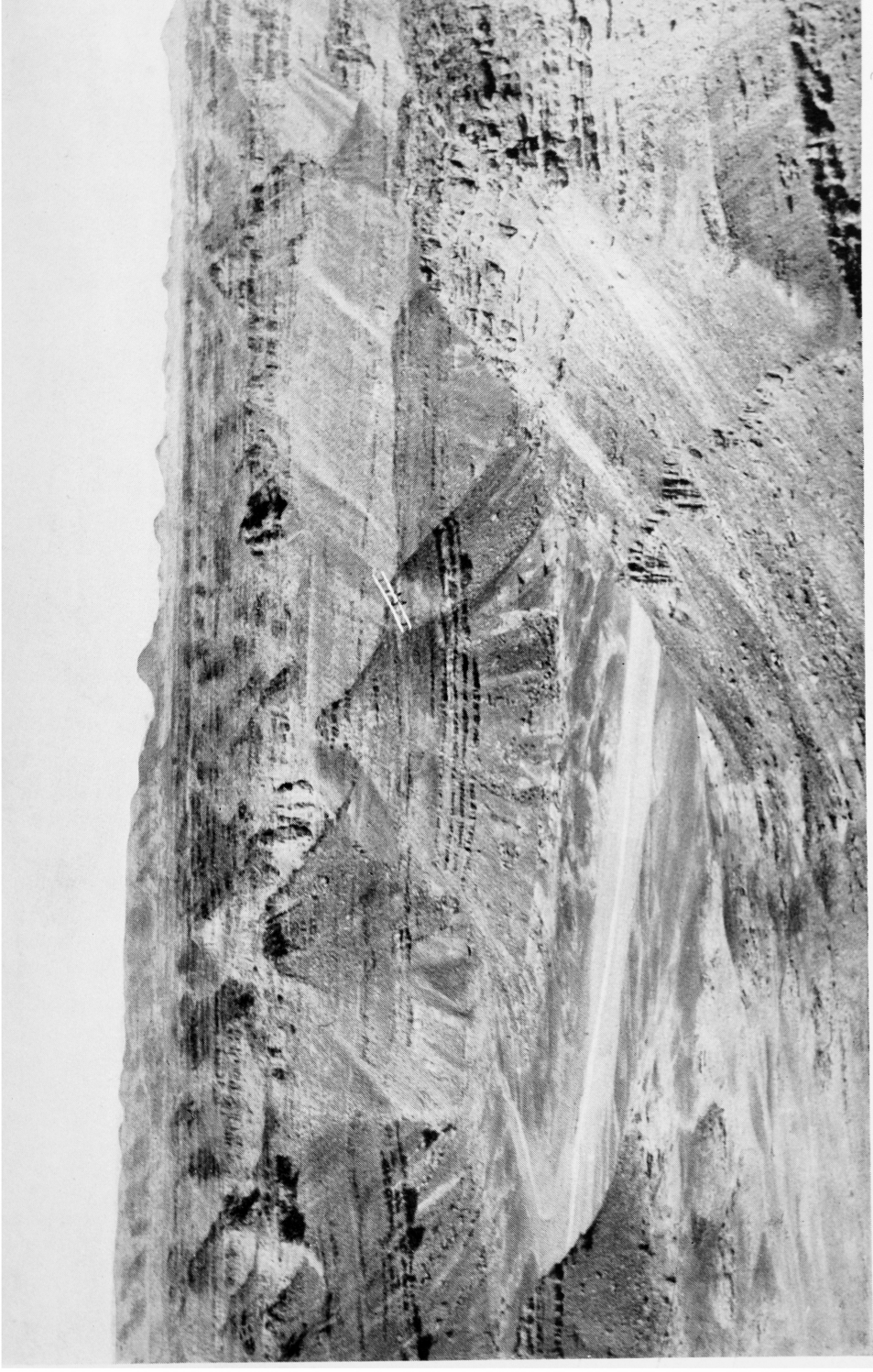
¹ See note, p. 73.

² In Guarmani's original these bearings are printed thus: 35' S.E. $\frac{1}{3}$ S.S.E., and 25' S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.S.E. For explanation see Introduction, p. xxxiii.

³ See Appendix IX.

⁴ *Uedi el-Aanab*, Wadi Anab, actually rises to the south of *Ras Tobeit*, in the main Tubaiq hills, otherwise this first mention of an important drainage is correct. It falls to the Jafr depression to the east of Maan.

⁵ See Appendix X.



JABAL TUBAIQ

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At 2 hrs. south-south-east from the last bend observed in the Aanab, an isolated mountain is seen towering above a pool of water which is about 100 metres in circumference and scarcely 10 m. south-west from the base of this mountain. It is named Raz el-Tobeit,¹ the topmost point being the "Tobeit"; it is in fact a fairly high mountain, of basalt formation, broken at the summit, the sides covered with heaps of rocks, from which stones continually break loose and go to form the heap of fragments at its base.

On reaching the pool, the plain is gained after 20 m. in a southerly direction. Instead of flint as on the Ard el-Suan, this is covered all over with a fine layer of basalt. A number of small streams fall on every side, all finally taking a direction from north-west to south-west.

For 3 hrs. 45 m. south-south-east one must march across the middle of the plain. On the left is a range of basalt mountains,² like Raz el-Tobeit, which are gradually lost to sight in the direction of the Uedi el-Serhan. On the right, sand-dunes are seen, which join in at the end of the plain with the sandy, basaltic and chalky hills which separate the Tobeit from one of its subdivisions, El Fihe (30 m. south-south-east from the time the hills are first met with).

El Fihe³ is a narrow, sandy valley, bordered on each side by equally sandy mountains, amongst which a few basalt ones show themselves on the left, being separated from the principal chain by the sand. It takes an hour and 20 m. south-south-east to traverse the last slopes, which lead to a small natural basin of water, embedded amidst some low hills rising above the sandy soil of the plain. Amongst these low hills shelter must be taken for the night. Eight hours and 5 m. is a long enough journey, considering the forced march of the two preceding days.

El-Tobeit is Scerarat territory and does not present the dangers of the Ard el-Suan.

The Scerarat are divided into four tribes: the Debain (Sheikh Dgereid), El-Hlese (Sheikh Eben-Daega), El Azzam (Sheikh Zeidan-eben-Uardi), and El-Flekan (Sheikh Selim el-Kaui). 4,000 foot-soldiers, 2,500 of them armed with rifles, and 20 horsemen are the armed force of these four tribes. The men without horses are mounted in *gazzu* on dromedaries, bred by

¹ *Raz el-Tobeit*. This is an isolated landmark, and is the same as Musil's *Kart al Anab* (Qarat al Anab), now commonly called "Black Rock", or Al Anab.

² This is the first mention we have by an eyewitness of the Tubaiq highlands, a unique feature in the topography of north-west Arabia. It is a sandstone range with lava outcrops, extending, as Guarmani says, towards the Wadi Sirhan.

³ *El Fihe*. The Fiha "fault", the easiest passage through the Tubaiq uplift, now used by cars.

themselves and acknowledged to be the finest and swiftest of any in the deserts. El-Dgebur is the subdivision of the El-Hlese; El-Dgiueni of the Azzam; the Debain are subdivided into El-Asbeh, El-Sobahi, El-Defaf, El-Rascid, El-Debauin, and El Atie. The Atik and the Kessalma are the subdivisions of the Flekan. It is said that the Scerarat are descended from the Beni-Kelb;¹ they never marry with other nomads, who consider them as gipsies from the inhabitants of Syria, on account of the fable asserting that their origin is from the union of a woman and a dog, the truth of this hidden mystery being unknown.² Great hunters of ostriches, gazelles and wild-cattle, owners of vast numbers of camels and dromedaries, they are the wanderers *par excellence*. Every evening they pitch their tents, which are loaded at sunrise on camel-back, changing their camp each day in search of better grazing lands over their wide territories, and also to escape the vigilance of their numerous enemies.³

It takes 11 hrs. and 2 m. to get out of the Fihe. For the first 2 hrs. 20 m. the ground is flat and even between two streams, which start in winter from the hills shutting in the track; where the valley becomes much narrower the right-hand torrent must be crossed. The hills are surmounted in 20 m. and a plain is reached, to find again, after another 40 m. more hills, which cannot be climbed in less than 1 hr. 32 m. march. These last hills come after 37 m. march and are divided into two ridges; the first one almost entirely sandstone, and the second and largest entirely basaltic. The first ridge has only a very slight rise and fall; the second, on the con-

¹ See Appendix XI.

² The *Scerarat*. Guarmani's meeting with the Shararat in this region is what we would expect. Even if these unobtrusive, but rather intriguing non-Badawin people cannot call the Tubaiq their own *dira* (it is actually Huwaitat), they use its waterings and hunting-grounds probably more than any others, and are always to be found in its vicinity. Guarmani says the Tubaiq is Shararat territory, but to be exact the Shararat are a landless people, and they wander only on the sufferance of stronger tribes. Guarmani tells truly of their poverty, and their good-looking womenfolk, their capacity as hunters, and their skill in camel-breeding. His imputation as to their origin is what one might expect to be said of a tribe which is not *asil*, of known pedigree, and therefore not accepted amongst the Arabs as pure Badu.

They are called non-Badawin; but if the mark of the Badawin is camel-ownership, the Shararat certainly share it,—are not their camels "praised above other in Western Arabia"? Also, unlike the Suluba, they are recognised as a tribe. The fact is there is no specific name for this particular social stratum. Philby thinks that the Shararat like the Hutaïm are Badu, but of an inferior status. Their tribes are, as Guarmani says, Dhubein, Huleisa, Azzam and Fuleihan; Wallin adds a fifth, Suleim.

³ The Tubaiq region is the last (northerly) refuge of the wild-cow, or oryx antelope; ostriches and gazelle are also found.

trary, as the altitude increases becomes a chain of peaks, and the road passes along the edge of precipices in a thousand twists and turns so as never to lose the south-south-east course, which has not altered since entering the Fihe. The mountains terminate in a sea of sand, the waves of it reaching to the topmost summits. In a century or two, owing to the action of the wind, these will be completely destroyed, in the same way as those hills still showing basaltic heads have almost disappeared into the valley below, so that one would imagine them to be only immense rocks detached from the neighbouring mountains by earthquakes, and not yet invaded by the sand of the plains. Seventeen minutes' steep descent brings one into the centre of the valley, then, proceeding in a straight line for 2 hrs. 43 m. over the sandy and often undulating ground, three pools of rain water are seen, 35 m. beyond the last basaltic mountains, which serve to show that the south-south-east course must be altered. For 35 m. the south-east must be followed, then the south-south-east again for a quarter of an hour, until two more pools are found; these are smaller than the others but the water is better, the bed not being entirely of sand. Ascending gradually for 1 hr. 45 m. south-east, the end of the Fihe is reached in a gorge formed by mountains rising on each side; these get closer and closer, till they suddenly separate again and open on to a stream rushing down into the Uedi el-Gare.

At the Uedi el-Gare, which flows towards the south-east, is the halt for the night.

The Uedi el-Gare does not form part of the El-Tobeit, it is the southern boundary of the sand-desert of Northern Hedgiaz on the western edge of the Nefut. Descending the hills 40 m. south-east, 5 m. south-south-east, and then again 35 m. south-east and 10 m. south-south-east, an extensive plain is reached, covered with hills of grey stone which is constantly breaking up, becomes powder and settles down to the level of the surrounding region. From these hills 25 m. south-south-east and 25 m. south-east there is a small pool; proceeding another 10 m. south-east and 30 m. south-south-east farther, another larger one is noticed only 20 m. north-north-east from the extremity of the little ridge of hills which abut the road and are formed like the hills in the plain, of grey and sandy stone. These hills come well into the Uedi el-Gare from the Uedi el-Neiel, giving the impression of two seas partially divided by a strait. A rest of at least two hours is necessary amongst these hills, whither one must arrive before dawn; then crossing them in 20 m. (10 m. to the south and 10 m. to the south-south-east), one descends into the plain, where a south-south-east course is again followed without further deviations. After 45 m. some very

small hills are reached; these are crossed in 5 m. They end 35 m. from a pool, which has a surface of 5,000 square metres. On reaching this, its right edge must be skirted for 16 m. to the foot of two low hills right in the road (these take 6 m. to cross), then one comes out again on to the plain in a long direct march of 6 hrs. 11 m. On each side are seen a number of smaller pools. The last one of these is scarcely 38 m. from another offshoot of the Uedi el-Neiel hills, which again come into the Gare, as though to divide it, but, instead, gradually drop away and disappear in the west.¹

The Gare, which is not frequented by the Scerarat before March, is in February an exceedingly dangerous place. The quantity of water in the pools, never totally dry except in May, attracts all the foragers of the desert, who are certain of being able to fill their water-skins and water their dromedaries. It is sometimes a meeting-place for Beduin belonging to far-away tribes, and often even the enemies of the Scerarat and of their allies; or of thieves, who assail friends and enemies alike by night, should they not be strong enough to defend themselves. For these reasons the traveller is obliged to cross it as rapidly as possible, not venturing to rest, however tired, unless he can find a good hiding-place in the inequalities of the ground, or in the bed of one of the many wadis which flow in a southerly direction, eventually trending to the south-west.

The last offshoot of the Uedi el-Neiel hills in the Gare is crossed in 25 m.; after this there is a slightly undulating area composed of fragments of flints, sandstone, and small, chalky rocks. The composition of this soil makes it difficult to be certain whether the footprints of a dromedary are of the same day. After continuing about 15 m. to the south-south-east one must turn towards the south for 10 m. and enter a little valley, hidden on all sides by the height of the ground surrounding it. In this valley many caves are to be found.

A rest and an hour's grazing for the dromedaries is necessary here.

On leaving the little valley, the ground is again quite flat for the space of 3 hrs., the course being always south-south-east as far as some isolated mountains, which must be skirted (20 m. east-south-east, and 12 m. south-

¹ It is a pity Guarmani is not more explicit about this stage between the Tubaiq and Fajr, for he is our only authority. The two land features he mentions, the *Uedi el-Gare* and the *Uedi el-Neiel*, are not easily explained. The former may refer to a Qara, or depression, of which there are many in the locality, and the latter seems to be out of place, the only Wadi Nayyal we know of being between the Fajr and Taima. His route must have lain to the west, but parallel with my own outgoing track in 1909. The district is called Rufaiya.

east); then marching for 18 m. south-south-east, one reaches some hills composed entirely of sand, separating the Gare from the Feger; these hills are easily crossed in 15 m.

The 16 hrs. 33 m. of road which extends between the two extreme points of the Gare (north-north-west to the south-south-east) should be accomplished, if possible, in less than ten hours, so as not to find oneself in that region at sunset.

At daybreak, on every hillside and in the adjacent plains, the Scerarat flocks will be seen grazing, tended by their nomad owners.

The Tiaha Beni-Atie,¹ the Anasi Mahalaf, the Syrian Biscir, and the Sciammar, are the only Beduin who dare attack the Scerarat in the Feger. No one's safety can be guaranteed against the Biscir, if out of their own territories; but during the months of February and March they go to the Hammad, or great Syrian Desert, and, in order to reach the Feger, they must confront the Sciammar, their natural enemies, while they also run the chance (if in small numbers) of being attacked by the Scerarat themselves on their return from the tiring sands of the Nefud. The Uld-Ali can act as protectors against the Mahalef, and the Beni-Saker or Sakari against the Tiaha. The Sciammar never make war on the Scerarat unless they rebel against their ruler, to whom they are tributary; and in this case the Sciammar, added to the escort from the chief of the Tuha (and chosen from those who have been recently with their tribe), would serve as a protection.

The Feger is a safe place for an experienced traveller.² Although the soil of the *Uedi*, before reaching it, is very sandy, yet it is covered with green and the desert plants grow there particularly well and abundantly. It is more hilly than the Gare and dotted in the centre with isolated hills like in the Fihe, but the road is seldom hindered by sandhills, and these are easily surmounted without one being obliged to change one's course across the plain.

After 2 hrs. 10 m. one sees a pool of water (about 120 metres in circumference), where the water-skins must be refilled and the dromedaries given

¹ See Appendix XII.

² One could hardly describe the Fajr region as a safe place, even for an experienced traveller, for it is situated in a district which, although nominally Fuqara, is raided over by such hereditary enemies as the Huwaitat, Shammar and Ruwalla. Guarmani's exact route is difficult to follow. He does not appear to have gone to the Fajr well, but as there was so much surface water he had no need. He evidently struck the Wadi Fajr and travelled up it for some distance till he entered "a new valley called *Aghalet el-Gemelen*", actually the Shaib al Kelb which rises under the hill of that name (see below), but which he calls *Ras el-Feger*.

a drink, and in 3 hrs. 58 m. south-south-east the road skirts a chain of sandy mountains on the west; these must be left on one side in order to take a south-east course for 1 hr. and 20 m., till one arrives at other mountains which appear on the east; these are partly sandstone with basaltic tops. One then bears to the south for 35 m. and turns for 10 m. from the north-west to the south-south-east round one of these mountains, which is detached from the rest and forms a barrier; once more turn to the south-south-east for 1 hr. and 15 m., to the south-east 55 m., and to the south 12 m., in order to avoid wandering aimlessly amongst the labyrinth of hills on the right. Again the south-south-east must be followed for 1 hr. 11 m., and more sandhills are reached, running from west to east; here this day's journey will end after 9 hrs. and 36 m. march.

For 3 hrs. and 27 m. the track must be followed to the south-south-east, surmounting at intervals undulating ground taking only 48 m. and following 10 m. south-south-west down the bed of a torrent, which was to be seen about an hour away towards the east from last night's halt. Its winding course must be followed on the left, crossing it from time to time, until it finally turns to the south-south-west between two hills opening out into a new valley called Aghelet el-Gemelen.¹ The road bears 15 m. south-south-east, and 30 m. south-east in the Sehel el-Saaluh, or Saaluh Plain,² and reaches the Raz el-Feger, that is to say, the mountain which is either at the beginning or the end of the plain, according to whether the traveller comes from the south or from the north.

Now begins the Teime country! Its level is much lower than that of the Feger.

It takes 1 hr. 55 m. south-east to descend from the Raz el-Feger to the plain. After 20 m. descent a high, sandy plain³ with basaltic fragments is reached; then comes another slight drop for 25 m., and 10 m. more of a very steep descent and extremely rough ground.

The plain bears towards the east for 1 hr. 25 m., to the east-south-east

¹ *Aghelet el-Gemelen*, Ajidat al Jamalain. Guarmani was the first to record this landmark, and it remained for Lawrence fifty-two years later to confirm its position (see *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 246). One wonders why Guarmani kept so far to the westward; he was here within twenty-five miles of the Hijaz Pilgrim route, and far out of the direct line to his goal Taima, but his whole line from the Belqa onwards had been west of the direct track.

² *Sehel el-Saaluh*, or Plain of Saaluh, might be identified with the landmark "Selhub or Sellum (our Huweitat were not sure upon the name), a lofty hill on our left about three miles away" mentioned by Lawrence in chap. 45 of the so-called "Oxford Text" (1922) of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

³ Probably Al Hul, see Introduction, p. xxvii.

for 45 m., then 2 hr. 32 m. south-south-east and 48 m. south-east, descending again for 35 m., turning to the south-south-east for the last 5 m. towards small hills composed of calcareous rocks and sandy loam. Amongst these rocks, which offer an excellent shelter for the night, are to be found pools of clearest water. Once more the course must be 1 hr. south-east across a gently undulating plain, as indeed will be most of the plains met with hereafter; 20 m. amongst hillocks of sand and chalky rocks, 5 m. of descent into a lower plain, 25 m. south-south-east, 1 hr. east-south-east, 1 hr. south-east, 2 hrs. 39 m., south-south-east, then again another descent of 4 m., followed by 1 hr. of flat ground bordered by a stream flowing to the east, and lost to sight towards the south-west; having crossed this and after 5 minutes ascent, the entire valley of Teime can be seen below.¹ There is still a slight descent of 50 m. before arriving at the entrance to the valley between green rocks, almost reduced to sand, from which Teime is 45 m. distant to the south-south-east, the road extending across a very flat expanse of salt sand.

II

Teime is a village of a thousand inhabitants, governed for Talal-eben-Rascid by the Emir Rumman-eben-Ehteime of the Sciammar-Ferraga of the Gezire. At first sight it appears like an immense grove of palm trees, surrounded and protected by a ring of towers, squat and square in shape, about five to six metres high, rising up at irregular distances above the town walls, which are three metres high and twenty centimetres thick, and are built, like the towers, of sun-baked bricks.² The village is divided into three quarters, separated by internal walls, each quarter with its own plantations being completely isolated from the others. The houses are almost all hidden amongst these palm groves; the few to be seen alongside the street walls are built like big towers, with two stories, and get their light principally from an inside courtyard; they have also little slits in the external walls. Trunks and branches of palm trees, placed slantwise in order to facilitate the drainage of the winter rain and covered with earth, form the ceilings and roofs of the houses, built, like the walls, of bricks baked in the sun. Some are merely smeared over with wet sand, which hardens under the influence of the sun's rays, being composed of grains of basalt and granite; a few of them have a foundation of rough chalky

¹ The saline depression in which Taima lies is first seen from the lip of the Jarish escarpment, on which Guarmani evidently now stood.

² The towers were still standing, but there was little left of the town walls in 1909.

stones. The mosques are large plain rooms, the *mihrab* being turned towards the south; the highest minaret is a little higher than the tops of the surrounding palm trees.

Teime is a veritable labyrinth of little streets shaded by the leaves of the palm trees, by the vines which often hang from them, and by the projecting branches of figs, peaches and pomegranates, which were imported from Damascus a few years since and have thriven with success. It is watered by canals (many of them being made of palm trunks), which conduct water to the plantations from a public well in cases where there are no wells, or from others near by, possibly belonging to the owner of the grove.¹ The "communal" (public) well (now only so in name) has become the property of the members of the most influential families, although they cannot prevent others from using it when not using it themselves, provided they are given a small daily compensation.

This well is about forty metres in circumference and is very deep; forty-eight camels draw water from it continuously, just as is done in the Gaza plains, only by a far more ingenious device.²

There are also a few small fields in the village, of oats, wheat, tobacco, cucumbers and melons.

The principal resources of the inhabitants are dates and butter.

There is no public market or bazaar, purchases being made in the houses of the merchants themselves and from pedlars from Nejd, or, by going to Berka,³ a day and a half away, from pilgrims in Mecca caravans. The current coin is the camel and the date.

¹ Guarmani noted the principal characteristics of this ancient oasis with comparative accuracy. The three distinct quarters, the narrow streets, luxuriant growth of fruit and date, the great well-pit and its other water supplies, are all verified by subsequent travellers. For once Guarmani underestimates the population, for it is nearer 1,500 than 1,000. The Amir Rumman, of the principal Shaikhly family, was probably Abdul Aziz, whom Doughty found to be the typical "presumptuous, penetrating-malicious", fanatic Taimani, and with whom Huber and Euting had to deal in their search for the Taima stone. His reference to the "communal" well being no longer so, meant that it was largely controlled by the wealthy families, in that they were in a better position to buy the draw-camels. In old days the inhabitants owned their own beasts, but recently, according to Huber, they depended on animals hired from the nomads, and this was a great drain on their resources.

² For a full description of the famous well-pit see *Arabia Deserta*, vol. 1, pp. 292, 543-4, and also *Arabian Adventure*, pp. 90-2.

³ *Berka* must stand for *birkat*, a cistern, or reservoir, and may refer to Qalaat Muadh-dham, where there is a famous cistern of great size, or possibly to Dar al Hamra, these being the two stations on the Hajj route nearest to Taima, about eighty miles distant. According to Wallin, there is also a reservoir, *Ukla*, half-way between Taima and Tabuk.

One sees in Teime Beduin dress and customs in all their purity. Their 150 gunners with their matchlocks, and their twenty horsemen, all mounted on mares, would be useless as a defence if they were not tributaries of Talal-eben-Rascid, the ruler of the Gebel, and consequently allies of the Scerarat, the Anasi-Uld-Suleiman and the Aleidan, who alone penetrate into their territory.

The Aleidan,¹ a section of the Uld-Ali, detached themselves (as did part of the Uld-Suleiman) from the Biscir and first remained stationary at Keibar, and eventually became wanderers in the northern desert of the Nejd; whilst all the rest of the Anasi families emigrated from Central Arabia and spread over the Syrian desert. The Aleidan, divided into two tribes, the Fegara and the Tuala (these must not be confused with the Tuala-Sciammar), are now commanded by the Sheikh Redgia Aleida; they number 150 horsemen and 2,500 riflemen mounted on dromedaries and live in their ancient home—the valleys extending between Teime and Keibar.

The Uld-Suleiman (Sheikh Mescel el-Auage)² number 200 horsemen and 2,500 riflemen on dromedaries; they are subdivided into Auage, Mrehem, Mertad, El Selimat, El Gadaure, El-Scemlan, El Sehul, El Kemsecia, and El Bedgiaide; they are all, like the Aleidan, Scerarat and Ehteim, tributaries of Talal-eben-Rascid; their territory is bounded by the rocks which separate the Ard-Teime from the Haulat, and it ends on the east-south-east at the granite mountains of Draaf, 10 hrs. away from Mesma; it comprises El-Giof, the great deep valley called Giof-Uld-Suleiman,³ to distinguish it from the Giof-Amer, formerly Duma el-Gendalie. The territory stretches from east-north-east to the west-south-

¹ "Allayda", "the Sheykhy fendy (kindred) of Welad Aly" (Doughty). Also called Al Aida, or the southern Wuld Ali, the rest of the tribe inhabiting the north Syrian desert up to the Euphrates. The two divisions Guarmani mentions, *Fegara* and *Tuala*, are the Fuqara section of the Wuld Ali, and the Tuwalla clan of the Al Aida. Burckhardt mentions a Wuld Ali Sheikh, *Aleyda*, who distinguished himself in the Wahhabi war.

² *Uld-Suleiman*. Wuld Sulaiman, sub-tribe of the Fadan of Anaza stock, and partly of Bishr lineage. Doughty knew *Misshel el Auagy*, called after his kinship Auajy. He wandered eastwards with him from Taima. Misshel was a mighty spearsman, whose lance, the Bishr boasted, had a head as "large as a hand-breadth and waggleth as a tongue athirst to lap up his enemies blood". A great sheikh, but fanatic. The other divisions of the tribe, according to Doughty's informant—Zeyd, the Fuqara Shaikh—which we can recognise in Guarmani's text, are Sillimat, Gathowra, Shamlan, Khumsha. Their *dira* is given correctly. Huber includes the following divisions, not mentioned by Doughty: *El-Mert'ad* and *El-Merethem*.

³ See note, p. 86.

west, to the foot of the Gebel-Harre as far as Keibar, 47 hrs. south-south-east from Teime.

The Gebel-Harre is a long steep chain of basalt mountains which disappear in the sands of the Hedgiaz desert. It begins to the south of the Giof-Uld-Suleiman and south-west of the Draaf; its pastures are frequented by the tribes of the Ehteim, El-Haiarat (Sheikh Kameir-eben-Merif), Beni Rascid (Sheikh Rascedan-eben-Barrah), El-Nuemse (Sheikh Scelian-eben-Nomas), and El-Maimzet (Sheikh Faradge-eben-Sciuele). The Ehteim have no horses except about twenty mares, but breed a race of dromedaries which are greatly esteemed,¹ and they can arm 3,500 riflemen; their long blue shirts distinguish them from other Beduin. They overrun the triangle formed by the Gebel-Harre, the western borders of the Cassim and the territory of the Beni-Harb.²

Keibar is a village of 2,500 inhabitants, surrounded, like Teime, by palm groves. It is divided into seven quarters, each one occupying one of the seven valleys of the Gebel-Harre, where many springs of the purest water are to be found.³ These valleys are dominated by a high rock on which are to be seen the ruins of a very ancient fortress, called Kasser el-Ieudi or the Castle of the Jews. The population of Keibar is composed of Moors and Abyssinians, descendants of slaves owned by the Uld-Suleiman and Aleidan. These slaves stayed on there when their masters, some centuries ago, were killed off in great numbers by smallpox, and believing the water the cause, the survivors had abandoned the village; without, however, presuming that they had forfeited the right to consider themselves the proprietors, they ceded it to those who remained for a tribute of two bunches of dates from each tree at harvest and permitted them to plant other crops as they pleased.

Every year the Uld-Suleiman and Aleidan come to Keibar but do not enter it, believing the water to be fatal to white people; the black inhabitants consign the dates due to them, with the obligation that they should hand to Talal-eben-Rascid their tribute, already agreed on, of 2,000 "thaler megidi", or 9,320 francs, the only tribute to which they are liable.

The free inhabitants of Keibar are governed by the Sheikh Kamed-eben-

¹ Confirmed by Doughty. See *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, pp. 230, 239.

² See note, p. 30.

³ Doughty records: "The Kheibar valleys, which are commonly said to be seven, lying side by side in the Harra". The population is probably nearer 1000 than 2500, and the water is distinctly impure. Doughty found it tepid and sulphurous, but there are some sweet wells.

Sciamsi, an Abyssinian by origin; all are Mussulman and they are as a rule of an amiable disposition.

It is absolutely false to say that Keibar was peopled by Jews in the eighteenth century.¹

Between Teime and Bir el-Metela in the Neged, Beduin encampments of the Anasi and Neged Sciammari are constantly to be met with. The road should lead in a straight line to the east $\frac{1}{4}$ east-south-east, if the Nefut sands did not bar the way, forming a crescent which is totally unavoidable for 57 hrs.² 31 m. It takes 1 hr. and 25 m. east-south-east to go across the valley, where the ground presents no sort of difficulty; the road twists for 5 m. south-east between the rocks up a slight incline to reach the hills which dominate the Teime region on all sides; one then goes on for 1 hr. 10 m. to the south-east until the hills end; these are seen vanishing towards the west-south-west. Going east-south-east for 5 m. and descending slightly for 20 m., one reaches the plain close to a reservoir of water in a bed of calcareous rock. Proceeding for 50 m., descending again for 14 m., one reaches the flat; the course must now be changed to the south-east, leaving on the left hand (after 50 m.) and on the right hand (after 75 m.) two large pools, 25 m. distance from one another, which are invariably dry in the month of April. Another 20 m. march brings one to the rocks separating the Ard-Teime from the Haulat.³ These rocks are crossed in half an hour, and El-Haulat begins. The Nefut sands are to be observed in the distance 12 hrs. to the north-east, extending from the north-west

¹ The last authentic record of the Jewish colony of Khaibar is Varthema's statement that the caravan with which he travelled to Mecca stopped to water at Khaibar—a mountain where dwelt four or five thousand Jews. That was in 1503. The Jews held Khaibar in pre-Islamic days, but we know that Muhammad reduced them to poverty, and that the Caliph Omar expelled them. "In Arabia there shall be no faith but the faith of Islam." They were back again in the twelfth century, however, for Benjamin of Tudela found a colony of them. At what exact date they were again driven out we do not know, but Burckhardt, in the early nineteenth century, and later Burton reported them as having entirely disappeared (see Discourse by Sir Richard Carnac Temple in *The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna*). Strange legends have gathered around the Khaibar Jews, all of them fabulous, according to Doughty; see *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, p. 127.

² The south-western corner of the great sand-bed does bar the direct route between Taima and Bir Matala. The crossing (not followed in the whole by any traveller, but in part by Gertrude Bell) would be roughly sixty miles. There are two waterings we know of on this stage over the Nafud—Haizan and Qulban—and there are probably others. They belong to the Wuld Sulaiman.

³ *El-Haulat* is Wallin's *Alkhawla*. He applies it to the whole district between Taima and Jabal Shammar. Philby queries it as the biblical Havilah, where there is gold.

to the south-east. In front, east-south-east $\frac{1}{2}$ south-east, is the pass dividing the Gebel-Keluan from the Enka;¹ and to the south-east is El-Berd, an isolated mountain, separated by the sands surrounding it from the basaltic chain of the Enka, from the Keluan on the north-east and from the other mountains which rise and are lost to sight on the south-west.

El-Haulat is covered with sand hills, and with rocks, which are calcareous from north-west to west, and from west to south, and basaltic from south to east. The neighbourhood of the Nefut causes it to be sandy from north-west to east-south-east. In winter no water flows in any stream bed; there are neither wells, springs nor pools. As soon as the rain ceases, the little water not absorbed by the ground rapidly evaporates. On calm nights the morning dew is very abundant, and the herds taken out to graze find the grass so wet that they do not need to be watered for several days. El-Haulat is crossed in 2 hrs. and 5 m., going south-east towards the plain on the horizon which divides the Enka from the Berd. Then 1 hr. south-south-east and 30 m. east, circling round some rocky hills which lie across the track, then 2 hrs. 35 m. on the usual south-east course, and 1 hr. 35 m. east-north-east, where more hills interrupt the line of march, then south-east again for 3 hrs. 47 m., directing one's steps straight towards the gap between the Enka and the Keluan. As one turns to the east-north-east, the latter mountain is seen to join the Nefut sands on the east.²

The gap dividing the two mountains turns 10 m. east-south-east, 10 m. east, and opens over the Sehel, or plain of the Beni-Helal. On the left the Keluan ends, and is lost to sight in the Nefut sands to the north-east. The Enka stretches away on the right, and sweeping round in a semicircle borders the track as far as the end of the plain, where a line of hills begins, which join on to the outlying spurs of Gebel-Arnen,³ a mountain bordering the Beni-Helal on the east and south-east, made famous by all the folk-songs of Arabia. The Nefut also forms on the opposite side a semicircle from the north-west to the east, its extremities resting on the Arnen and on the hills which break off from the Keluan.

The Sehel is flatter than the Haulat, and the ground is more sandy. In the centre, great rocks, with basaltic prisms, rise up like so many fantastic

¹ Although this name is not recorded by Wallin, Huber, or Doughty, its position, as described, with regard to Helwan and Burd, identifies it with *Tzebad* of Huber (1884). The "gap between the two mountains" is obviously the same in each case. Wetzstein mentions it, see *Zeit. für Allg. Erdk.* vol. xviii, 1865, p. 417.

² Huber passed between the two on apparently hard ground.

³ See Wetzstein, *Zeit. für Allg. Erdk.* vol. xviii, 1865, p. 417 n.

castles, separated from the Enka by the sand which already fills up the low valleys. Several streams traverse it, although the water which fills them in the rainy season is soon absorbed in their sandy beds, and never a drop is to be found after the winter is gone.

An easy descent of 1 hr. 15 m. east-south-east down the eastern side of the mountains, which form its western boundary, brings the traveller to the Seh-el-Beni-Helal. This is a fairly undulating plain, which is traversed in 1 hr. 20 m. south-east and 5 hrs. 30 m. east-south-east as far as the last steep cliffs of the Enka, and close to the hills in the neighbourhood of the Arnen. Having reached the hills, one must turn without altering the main direction 35 m. south-east, 1 hr. 25 m. east, and again 35 m. south-east, when one arrives at the foot of the Arnen, through a labyrinth of rocks, very difficult of access.¹ The Arnen is traversed in 2 hrs. 45 m. east-south-east. Half-way, natural basins of water are found in the rocks, containing water in the spring and sometimes even in summer if the winter rains have been heavy.² Having crossed the Arnen, it is seen to turn to the north-east, then to the east and south-east, eventually joining on to the Mesma which rises in front, thus forming three-quarters of a natural amphitheatre which dominates a portion of the great plain of the Ghebal; the Mesma completes the other or fourth quarter. These two chains of mountains are exposed to the south winds. The sand which has accumulated through centuries has formed an incline from the summit of the mountains down into the centre of the plain; taking a line between the two extreme points from west to east, the space they surround is in the form of an amphitheatre. The Arabs name this slope *Bein el-Hornein*, meaning "between the two horns".³ It is terminated on each side by small hills connected only by their bases to the main ridge. These hills stand out in the plain exactly like the horns of a crescent.

El-Ghebal⁴ is a great sandy plain like the Seh-el-Beni-Helal; it is bounded

¹ Arnan and its labyrinth of rocks; to get the right atmosphere of this curious region, Doughty's account, which is indeed one of his masterpieces, should be read, viz. vol. 1, pp. 322-3.

² Possibly *Ghadir al-Barud* of Huber's 1884 journey.

³ *Bein el-Hornein*, Bain al Qurun. Huber gives a feature of this description, only on a smaller scale. According to him the two outcrops, Arnan and Misma, are separate, but Arnan and its subsidiary outcrops do form a distinct amphitheatre. With regard to the sanding up of these ranges lying just outside the Nafud, Huber corroborates Guarmani. Misma, he says, is covered in sand to its summits, its northern end being entirely submerged, and is not visible.

⁴ *El-Ghebal*, Al Jebaal. Wetzstein observes that *El-Ghebal* may be used in the sense of *Ard el-Gebelat*, that is, "the region of isolated hills", but it is more likely, he says, that

on the south by the Harre, El-Giof-Uld-Suleiman and El-Draaf; on the north by the Arnen, El-Mesma and the Nefut sands; on the east by the frontiers of the Gebel, and on the west by the mountains which are a continuation, with many breaks, of the Enka chain.

The string of the bow formed by the Arnen and the Mesma extends in a straight line to the east for 4 hrs. 15 m. After continuing on this course for two hours, that is to say, until a round, isolated hill is seen half an hour off in the plain to the right, the highest points of the Harre can be seen at 18 hrs. south-south-east.¹ The side of the *Bein el-Hornein* next the Arnen (a 55 m. descent) is included in the 2 hrs. 45 m. east-south-east required to cross over it; the side ascending to the Mesma extends for 1 hr. 55 m. to the east-north-east towards the gap in the mountains made by the last hill separating from them; so that the two extremities of the *Bein el-Hornein* are distant, one from the other, 7 hrs. and 5 m. march.

Having ascended the second part of the *Bein el-Hornein* to the summit of the Mesma (not yet invaded by the sand), the course must be altered from east-south-east to south-east; it then takes 30 m. to twist amongst the cliffs of this hill, which is detached from the principal ridge; and going again to the east-north-east for 3 hrs. 10 m. one arrives at the point where the Mesma ends (on the south-east) and the descent into the Ghebal begins; during this descent of 3 hrs. 10 m. great deposits of rain-water are met with at each step. The basaltic mountains finish with the Mesma.² At 10 hrs. east-south-east are the Draaf mountains and hidden at their base is the long deep valley of the Giof-Uld-Suleiman, where there are twelve wells of drinking water dug by the Uld-Suleiman of the Biscir tribe, who alone have the right of pasture here.³

Guarmani mistook it for "Ginab", the name applied to this region in general by old geographers. Authority seems to be against Wetzstein, for Doughty passed through "the rugged district el-Jebâl" to the south-east of Taima, and speaks again of the ruinous stacks of el-Jebâl; while Huber records *El-Gebal* as the name of the region between Jabal Misma and Taima.

¹ The northern edge of the Harrat Ethnan would be easily discernible at about thirty-five miles.

² Guarmani notes correctly the line of demarcation between the granites of Jabal Aja and the sandstone regions to the west. Doughty and Huber both show on their maps that Misma is sandstone, and that Wariq is granite. See also p. 87.

³ This is the first mention of an important watering-place, of which we have more recent confirmation, but which has not been visited by any other Western traveller. *Giof-Uld-Suleiman* is doubtless the depression which Huber reported as being the junction of the Wadis *Aba Sliman* and *Sbatar*, near which the wells of the Wuld Sulaiman are to be found. Huber says these waterings are composed of many wells (6, 12, or 20 according to various sources), and that they lie four hours to the west, or half a day to the south-

After 40 m. descent north-north-east, the Ghebal is again reached and found to be more sandy than ever. The Nefut sands, no longer kept back by the mountains, approach the direct route to the east-north-east beyond El-Ureik, and finally cross it after 5 hrs. 55 m. El-Ureik is then only 50 m. away in the sands, but its eastern side can only be reached by turning to the east-north-east, because the mountain is isolated in this first patch of Nefut, where the sands form high dunes separated from each other by deep hollows. It is therefore necessary to turn for 1 hr. 25 m., beginning from the first sand-hills, which mark the end of the Ghebal.

El-Ureik¹ is a granite mountain having another little hill on the north of it and several rocks on the south; these rocks are towards the Draaf and appear like points of a line of hills buried by the Nefut sands, but which once formed a single ridge continuous with the Draaf.

Having followed the road for another 6 hrs. east-north-east, continually descending and ascending the sand-mountains which lie across the track, a high granite cliff is reached which has reservoirs of water on its western flank.² The water is drawn from several openings bearing the trace of man's handiwork. Leaving the cliff on the left and proceeding 25 m. north-east, 30 m. east-north-east, 50 m. north-east, 25 m. north-north-east, the Bir or well of Metelah is reached at last; this is to the north of the mountain which bears its name, and here the Gebel begins.

The Anasi of Nejd no longer pitch their tents between the Ureik and west, of Baidha Nethil—that "great watering in the Bishr border" mentioned (but not seen) by Doughty, the position of which we know with fair accuracy. The wells are unusual waterings in that they are entirely dependent on surface, not on subterranean, water. They are a catchment-area for winter rains, a rock strata 7 metres below the surface retaining the water so efficiently that even after a winter of slight rainfall the wells can be relied upon for two years. See Huber's *Journal*, p. 207.

Guarmani's statement that the *Giof* is under the Draf mountain is incorrect, for Jabal Draf is the landmark for Baidha Nethil; but that the Draf is 10 hrs east-south-east of Misma is more or less correct. No traveller has actually been there, but Huber took innumerable crossbearings on to this landmark on his way to Taima from Hail in February 1884.

Incidentally Doughty places *Ybba Sleyman* on his map in its correct position in relation to Baidha Nethil; he passed close by, but curiously enough it is one of the few localities, which he records in his map, to which he makes no reference either in his text or in his index. Guarmani's statement (pp. 25–26) that he rode up from the Khaibar Harra to the wells and back between the 19th and 28th of February is quite in order; the distance to and fro would be only about 150 miles, and he evidently spent some time in looking for, and at, horses.

¹ Wariq, ? Wuraik. Wallin records: "The extensive valley of *Warik*"; but on Huber's map (1884) it appears as the name of a hill—*Oureitz*.

² Huber mentions finding a square rock-hewn basin here in 1880.

the Metelah. This region, being too close to the Gebel, is given over to the Sciammar, who consider themselves subjects of Talal-eben-Rascid, while the other Beduin and their tributaries aspire to independence.

Gebel is the most northern province of the Neged, or, as the Arabs call it, one of the seven Negeds. The sands of the Nefut, extending from Metelah to the Selma, and enclosing the villages of Gobbah, Tueie, Henakie and Ghena, separate it from the Giof-Amer (50 hrs. by caravan to the north-west), forming a barrier from east to west and extending to the north. On the west and the south, from Metelah to the Mestegeddeh plain, prismatic basalt hills and similar masses rising from a sea of sand form a frontier; they are lost in the granite mountains of the Draaf, which on the north-east join the double chain of the Uedi-Selma, and on the south-west extend to the Gebel-Harre. On the east and the south the Gebel-Selma and the Uedi-Selma separate it from the Ghafeh territory, which one must cross to reach Cassim, another even more important province of Nejd, its principal towns being Aneizeh, El-Raz, and Breda.

The entire province was once covered by a single chain of granite mountains, dominated by the high mass of the Gebel-Selma; but now that the sands have penetrated into the valleys, and almost completely filled them up, they are broken up into a number of small ranges of hills, which will be even more divided up if the sand continues its levelling process, until eventually, only a few rocks will be seen scattered over the vastness of the desert.

The Gebel is considered to be under the dominion (as is the rest of the Neged) of Feisal-eben-Terki-eben-Abdalla, eben-Abd-el-Azis, eben-Mohammed, eben Sehud, of the Syrian Anasi Uld Ali tribe, of the family of Messalih. From Sehud by Medgerem, Mohammed and Abd-el-Azis, descended that Sehud, favourite and successor (heir) of Mohammed-eben-Abd-el-Uakab and his son Abdalla, the unfortunate prisoner of Ibraim Pasha, who was beheaded at Constantinople by order of the Sultan Mahmud.

The prince actually ruling over the Nejd can be called independent. Talal-eben-Abdalla eben Ali eben Rascid of the Sciammar-Abdeh-Dgiaafar only sends a small yearly tribute to Derreieh of six of the worst mares in his stables; these are despatched (with others of a better class) to the Sultan by Feisal-eben-Sehud through the Scerif of Mecca. The ruler has power of life and death over his subjects, notwithstanding that he is obliged to conform to the rules of government prescribed by the laws and customs of the nomads. During the last few years he has increased his power, and has subjected to tribute Fed and El Ghafeh on the road to

Cassim, Giof-Amer (formerly Duma el-Gendalie), the town of Scaca, the villages of Keibar and Teime, besides many more; he also includes the Anasi, the Biscir-Uld-Suleiman of Neged and the Aleidan, the Scerarat, Ehteim and the Sciammar-Tuman of the Gezireh, who often approach the Neged. The inhabitants of the conquered towns and villages pay, as do the sedentary population of the Gebel, a tenth of the products of the ground; the Arab Beduin, like the nomad Sciammar, pay three measures of butter per tent, a fifth of a "megidi" per camel, and ten piastres per flock of twenty head of sheep or goats.

The Gebel population is partly sedentary, and partly nomadic. Their numbers may be fixed approximately at 75,000.¹ The settled population are divided into Beni-Temim² and Sciammar; the nomadic section are all Sciammar.

The Sciammar, subdivided into Singhiara (Sheikh Ehgiud-eben-Remal), Esslem (Sheikh Kteben-eben-Tuala), Abdeh (Sheikh Seneide-eben-Gibrin), and Dagheret (Sheikh Reteh-eben-Said), are scattered all over the province, which is divided into four sections for the nomads, and into two for the villagers.

The Beni-Temim are the oldest inhabitants of the country. A descendant of their princes, Emir Ali-eben-Aied, is still living, though he has no power. He resides at Gofar.

The Sciammar towns and villages³ are as follows: Kail, 7,500 inhabitants, remarkable for the castle of the Emir, a large mosque, and a bazaar—the only one in the province; Mocac, 2,000 inhabitants, including five families of Beni-Kaled; Lechite, 1,500 inhabitants; Gobbah, 950 inhabitants. At Gobbah, travellers coming from the south pay a tax of a "thaler megidi", and those coming from the north pay two "thalers", for the right of drawing water. If the travellers be merchants, the price of a linen shirt must be added to the prescribed tax. Gofeife, 600 inhabitants; Tueie, 500 inhabitants; Ghenaa, 400 inhabitants; El-Ugid, 400 inhabitants; El-Bedan, 400 inhabitants; Usseta, 400 inhabitants; Ekede, 300 inhabitants; Lezzam, 300 inhabitants; El-Henakie, called by most nomads Haenie, 100 inhabitants.

The Beni-Temim live in Gofar, a town of 8,500 inhabitants, El-Roda,

¹ See Introduction, p. xxxiii.

² *Beni-Temim*, Bani Tamim, the remnant of a famous stock which extended over most of Northern Arabia and the Syrian Desert in pre-Islamic days. They were pushed out of Jabal Shammar by the incoming Tayy, and now, no longer nomadic, nor tribally organised, are to be found as settlers in practically all Najd villages.

³ See Introduction, p. xxiv.

2,000 inhabitants; Seban, 2,000 inhabitants; El-Mestegeddeh, 1,800 inhabitants; Bahcaa, 1,000 inhabitants; El-Kasser, 800 inhabitants; El-Gazal, 500 inhabitants; El-Saleime, 400 inhabitants; Tabe, 300 inhabitants.

El-Henakie, Gobbah, Ghenaa, Tueie, Mocac, Lezzam, Gofeife, and El-Bedan are in the territory of the Singhiara—El-Kfele and El-Azzamel; El-Kasser, El-Saleime, El-Roda and El-Mestegeddeh, in that belonging to the Dagheret—El-Scereke, El-Ghite, El-Traibat, El-Aleian and El-Hassan; all the territory comprising El-Gazal, Gofar, Ekede, Usseta, Kail, El-Ugid, Lechite and Bahcaa belong to the Abdeh—Dgiaafar, Gibrin and M'teri. The Esslem—Tuala, Udgiaan and Gheisen—have the surrounding parts of Seban and Tabe. When the Tuman enter the dependencies of the Gebel, they find themselves in the territory of the Esslem and Abdeh. The Tuman number 200 horsemen and 800 riflemen, under the Sheikh Fahalben-Aiesce.

Bir el-Metelah to Bedan takes 2 hrs. 30 m. (10 m. north-east, 25 m. east-north-east, 15 m. north-north-east across the sands, then 55 m. east and 45 m. south-south-east over level ground). Mocac lies 5 hrs. east $\frac{1}{2}$ east-south-east from El-Bedan, and 1 hr. 30 m. distant from the principal range of the Gebel.

From Mocac it is 30 m. south-east to El-Lezzam, 2 hrs. 45 m. south-west to El-Gofeife, 7 hrs. north-north-west to El Tueie; going in a semi-circle from the foot of the mountains to the Nefut sands. Gobbah is 10 hrs. north-north-west of Tueie. El-Mestegeddeh is 20 hrs. south $\frac{1}{2}$ south-south-east of Mocac; from El-Mestegeddeh to Kail it is 20 hrs. north $\frac{1}{2}$ north-north-east, to El-Saleime 5 hrs. 30 m. north-north-west, to El-Roda 6 hrs. north-east, to El-Gazal 9 hrs. north $\frac{1}{2}$ north-north-east. El-Gazal is 5 hrs. north-north-east from El-Saleime, 7 hrs. north-west from El-Roda, 6 hrs. south $\frac{1}{3}$ south-south-west from El-Kasser (which is 7 hrs. south-east from Mocac), 8 hrs. south-south-west from Gofar (which is 3 hrs. north-east $\frac{1}{3}$ east-north-east from Kasser). El-Gofar is 8 hrs. 30 m. east-south-east from Mocac and 3 hrs. south-west of Kail. Bahcaa is 15 hrs. east-north-east from Kail; Seban, under the Gebel-Selma, is 12 hrs. south-east from Kail; Tabe in the Uedi-Selma is 4 hrs. east-south-east from Seban. Usseta is 30 m. west of Kail. From Usseta to Ekede is 45 m. south-west through rugged mountains. About 4 hrs. nearly due north of Kail lies El-Ugid. From El-Ugid to Lechite is 2 hrs. north-west; and Lechite is 14 hrs. south $\frac{1}{2}$ south-south-east from El-Henakie and 4 hrs. east-south-east from Ghenaa. Gobbah is reached in 12 hrs. west-north-west from this last-named village.

All these localities are great palm groves in the plain which the sand

has formed between the mountains. Each is surrounded by a sun-baked mud-wall and flanked by towers. The houses are in no way different to those in Teime except that some are larger. The products of the soil are the same. There is no regular industry; the women weave coarse cloth, *abaks* or striped woollen cloaks, and coarse carpets. Pedlars wander continually through the villages, exchanging their merchandise brought from other parts of the Neged, from Arak-Arabi and the Hedgiaz, for home products.

The men's dress consists of a long white linen shirt, an *abah* of goat's-wool, in dark brown or in black and white stripes, a *keffieh* secured to the head by an *arkal*, and a pair of sandals. The women wear a blue skirt, a *sciambar* or large black veil of silk to hide the face, and a black or brown *abah* which covers them from head to foot.

Their religion is Sunnite Moslem; there are no longer any Uakabites. Notwithstanding this, the habit is still kept in several families of shaving the moustache and abstaining from smoking according to the rules laid down by the followers of Abd el-Uakab. The Emir Talal never smokes in public.

The inhabitants of the Gebel, fanatical to the last degree, tolerate neither Christians nor Jews. Their national flag has a green ground, with a red border, and across the centre, below an unsheathed sword, is written in white the inscription—"God and Mahomet"; that is to say, there is no divinity besides God and Mahomet is "God's Messenger".

In the event of war, all able-bodied men are compelled to bear arms. The Gebel, having a settled population of about 33,000, can arm 4,000 riflemen on dromedaries; the rifles are flint-locks. The nomadic Sciammars' contingent numbers 600 horsemen, and 2,000 riflemen on dromedaries. To the Sciammar cavaliers must be added 600 black horsemen belonging to the Emir; these are almost all slaves, and they are mounted on mares belonging to their master. The Beduin and town-dwellers paying tribute rarely join in the common defence. The Beduin are not considered loyal enough, while the townspeople could not send away their armed men without placing their town in peril. Nevertheless, Beduin often reinforce the Emir's armies by a thousand or so of riflemen, and 300 to 400 mounted men, should the foray be against distant enemies and there was a chance of loot. During the expedition, each man must provide himself with food and munitions as best he can.

The enemies against whom the Emir Talal-eben-Rascid is continually warring are the Syrian Anasi (Biscir and Ruola), the Dafir, the Ehtebe and the Meteir.

The Emir Talal-eben-Rascid provides an escort of 600 men, commanded by his brother Metab, for the caravan of Persian pilgrims, which goes every year from Bagdad to Mecca. He owns 800 slaves, 600 thoroughbred mares, and is considered the most wealthy of all the Emirs of Central Arabia; he is generally called Abu-Bendar, or, Father of Bendar—the name of his eldest son—and sometimes also Eben-Rascid, showing him to be the chief of his line. He has sixteen children alive, nine sons and seven daughters by his four wives (three of whom are daughters of Sheikh Sciammar and one a sister of Feisal-eben-Sehud). He has also a concubine, an Abyssinian slave of great beauty; whenever she is with child a miscarriage is forced by making her drink a small cup of mare's sweat (the mare having previously been heated by a short quick race); this is to prevent her having daughters, who eventually could not be suitably married.

The Sciammar-Abdeh family of Eben Rascid have held the reins of government since 1835. The Emir Abdalla, father of Talal, seized the control of affairs with the aid of his brother Obeid, after having murdered the legitimate ruler, Saleh-eben-Ali. The Emir Abdalla died in 1847.¹

The wild animals found in the Gebel are the ostrich, wild-cow, panther, leopard, fox, wolf, hare and gazelle;² the domestic animals are camels, horses, cattle, donkeys, dogs, cats and numerous flocks of sheep and goats. The Saleibs, or *nouar*, gipsies possess a breed of very fast and very fine white donkeys.³

The villages of Fed (500 inhabitants) 6 hrs. east-south-east of Tabe,⁴ and of El-Ghafef (2,000 inhabitants), 28 hrs. south-east of Kail, are the first stations for caravans travelling to Aneizeh, the capital of Cassim, and the most important and most populous town in Central Arabia.

Aneizeh is composed of seven quarters which might be called villages, El-Adelie, El-Akmar, El-Mesoukof, El-Guehe, El-Kadar, El-Kabb and El-Gossea, numbering in all 15,000 inhabitants. It is distinguished from a town of the Gebel by reason of the thickness of its outside walls, and by the plantation of palms which surrounds it like a garland; it is defended by about fifty solitary towers.⁵

¹ For details of this period, see *Arabia*, H. St J. B. Philby, pp. 108–9, 130–4. See also Appendix XIII.

² All these are found in the vicinity of Jabal Shammar; the distinction between panther and leopard is probably meant to specify the common leopard (*Felis pardus*) and the hunting-leopard, or cheetah (*Cynelurus jubatus*).

³ See Appendix XIV.

⁴ Modern maps show that it is nearly east-north-east.

⁵ Anaiza is actually a walled town within a walled oasis.

In 1863¹ the town revolted against Feisal-eben-Sehud. Besieged by the Emir Abdalla (son and heir presumptive of Talal-eben-Rascid), it made a vigorous resistance, routing the Emir Abdalla's troops in a single sortie; these would have been completely vanquished had not a heavy rain damped the fuses of the defenders' (townsmen's) rifles. Being forced to retire and being unable to bear the shock of the Gebel cavalry, commanded by the Emir Mohammed (Talal's brother), they fled, leaving about 200 corpses on the field of battle. Next day Aneizeh capitulated. Its ruler, Zamel, till then omnipotent, was deprived of the governorship of the town,² and his cousin, Emir Abdalla-eben-Seleib was proclaimed in his stead; the arrears of tribute were paid and the conquerors departed without entering the inside walls.

The Meteor, with a strength of 2,500 horsemen, live on the plains to the east of Aneizeh and as far as the valleys to the south-east of Ghafeh.

The Meteor form two tribes, the Eluah and the Breh; on account of ancient blood feuds they are continually at war amongst themselves.³ The Eluah is again divided into El-Duscian (Sheikh Maaghed-eben-el-Kemeid), El-Gheblan (Sheikh Eben-Lamed), El-Saaba (Sheikh El-Fogun), El-Megealda (Sheikh Eben-Sceblan), El-Gaimat (Sheikh Maetel el-Menahi), El-Aragbe-u-El-Baraasa (Sheikh Sultan-el-Sur). The Breh is divided into the tribes of El-Sarran (Sheikh Ahdal-eben-M'seis), El-Merehat (Sheikh Ali el-Merehi), El-Berisan (Sheikh Mohammed-abu-Sciueribat), El-Uisama (Sheikh Feurz-eben-Mehle), El-Dikakin (Sheikh Abu-Keleba), El-Abeiat (Sheikh eben-Asciua), and the Uled-Abbad (Sheikh Meblesce-eben-Ghibrin). The tributaries of Feisal-eben-Sehud are the enemies of Talal-eben-Rascid, of the Ehteim and of the Beni-Harb, and constantly harass them by raids along the southern borders of the Gebel. The Ehteim and Sciammar are the most frequent victims, because the Beni-Harb are all to be found on the west and south-west of the Ehteim territory, near Medina and El-Suarkie. The Beni-Harb are divided into El-Masruh (Sheikh Abd-el-Azis-el-Ferm), and Beni-Selem (Sheikh Seif-eben-Daian); the former are subdivided again into Beni-Ali, El-Auf, and Beni-el-Sefer; and the Beni-Selem into El-Maimun and El-Merauhe. The

¹ Philby says 1862. Doughty's account of these happenings is worth reading. See *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, pp. 428-30.

² See Appendix XV.

³ *Meteor*, Mutair. Alwi, is a sub-tribe, Barriya an independent but closely allied tribe, of the Mutair. Amongst Guarmani's enumeration of their divisions, we can recognise the Jiblan, Sahaba, and possibly the Malaiba of the Mutair, and the Barzan, Deyahin, Abayat of the Barriya.

Beni-Harb have 1,000 horsemen; they also pay tribute to Feisal-eben-Schud, but are, notwithstanding, allies of the Arab Ehtebe and the enemies of all the Nejd chiefs.

The Ehtebe, reduced by constant warfare to 700 horsemen, occupy the wide plains extending from the Gebel-Imarie¹ to the southern frontiers of the Ehteim territory, to the south of El-Meskeb.² Their tribes, Ruga and Bargha, are under the leadership of Sheikhs Sultan-eben-Rubean and Terki-eben-Kmeid. The Ehtebe horses are reputed to be the finest in the Arabian deserts.³

A day's march nearly due north of Aneizeh is the town of Breda, a larger but less populous town than Kail, and celebrated for its horse market. At 3 hrs. farther north, slightly north-north-west of Breda, lies the village of El-Aium, 1,500 inhabitants. Between El-Aium and El-Ghafeh there is another village, El-Guara (2,000 inhabitants), 10 hrs. south-south-east from El-Ghafeh, and 12 hrs. north-north-west from El-Aium.

El-Cassim begins close to El-Guara.

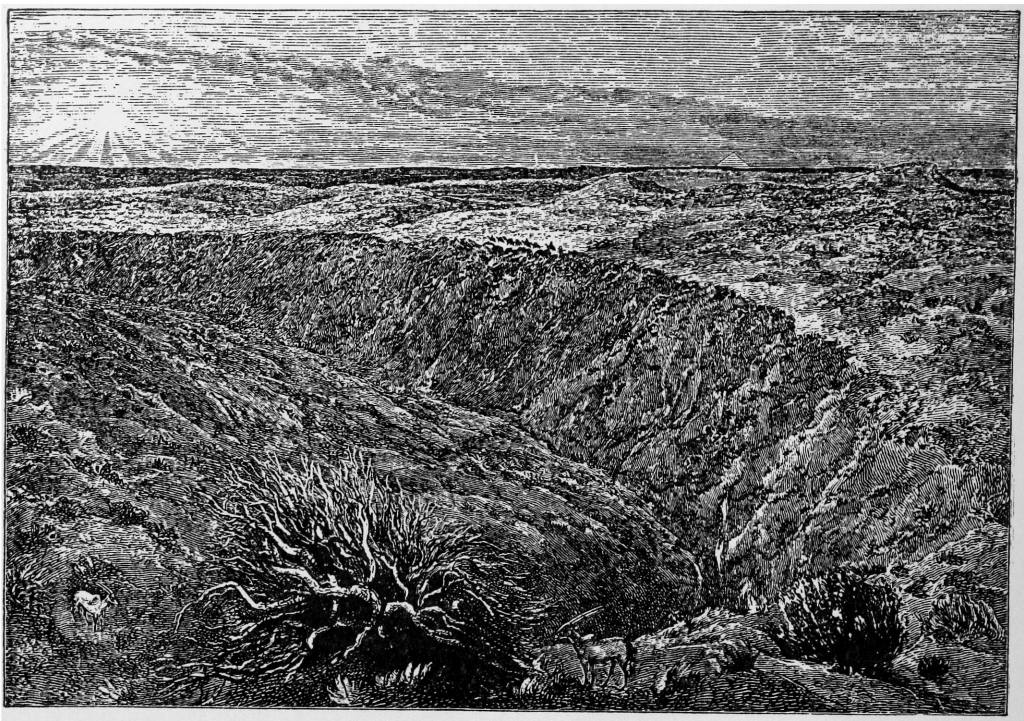
III

Gobbah owes it to the south wind, and to the Em-Senman and Gute mountains which protect it on the east and west, for not having yet been buried by the sands of the Nefut. A quarter of an hour away to the north rises a sand mountain which completely dominates it; to the right of it

¹ *Gebel-Imarie* appeared on the early maps as a long range of hills to the south of the main caravan route between Daraiya and Mecca. Chesney's map of Arabia and Syria (1849) made a great feature of it. The name, and the landmark, disappeared off more recent maps until Philby replaced it as J. Ammariyya, a name used locally "as an alternative appellation both of the Jidd range, of which it forms a part, and indeed of the whole Ardh range". Guarmani is correct in stating that this is the southern limit of the Ataiba.

² See note on p. 31.

³ The Ataiba *dira* is correctly stated. Their two main divisions are Ruuqa and Barqa; the Shaikhly families being Rubaian and Hindi. The Ataiba can be counted the most powerful tribe in Central Arabia, strong in arms and camel-herds, and second only in importance to the Anaza. They occupy the Eastern Hijaz around the volcanic Harras, between the Hajj route and the central steppes. They pasture as far as Qasim and Washm, and as far south as the *dira* of the Qahtan. Their own *dira* is exceptional in that it has a regular, though small rainfall, and even receives an influence of the monsoon rains in early autumn. It therefore grows, for Arabia, a considerable amount of vegetation, and there is good grazing. We know nothing about their horses. But Guarmani's remark may be true owing to this very fact, for it is certainly able to support a large head of sheep, camels and wild-game.



The Great Nafud, with *falq* in foreground, and twin peaks of Alaim in distance
(*From A Pilgrimage to Nejd, by Lady Anne Blunt*)

lies the track to Giof-Amer; the Em-Senman is the same distance to the west and El-Gute is 1 hr. 15 m. to the east.

The road to Giof-Amer is the work of the Beni-Helal.¹

Giof-Amer is 49 hrs. 30 m. north-west from Gobbah. The track winds through the sands for 47 hrs. towards the north and west, and then stretches in a straight line north-west across a sandy plain, descending for half an hour. The "road", as it is wrongly called, is merely a levelling of hills, filling up of the hollows, and smoothing out the Nefut sands as much as possible; although it is still as uneven as the sea in a storm, and it is difficult for the European eye to follow its winding course. Eighteen hours from Gobbah there is a dune covered with bushes, called Smeha,² after a young Sciammarie woman who was violated there; only Arab eyes can recognise it amongst the thousands of others exactly like it all along the track. El-Aiun-Gofeah,³ fountains of Gofeah, are fissures in the rocks, from which not a drop of water springs; they lie to the right of the track at the bottom of a steep slope 1 hr. and 30 m. after the Smeha dune, but owing to there being no water it cannot even serve as a "rendezvous". So as not to get lost, if unacquainted with the locality, a north-west course must be taken, changing only to the north or west where it is impossible to follow the right direction, until the Aleim hills are sighted, for they rise above the sands and can be seen, from every point, several hours before reaching them.

The Aleim hills are 25 hrs. from Gobbah; they are three in number; though being placed in a triangular position not more than two can be seen at a time.⁴

The Beni-Helal road from the foot of the Aleim to the end of the Nefut becomes very ill-defined, except here and there, and is not easy to follow.

Leaving the Aleim to the south-east the march is continued for 7 hrs., in a north-westerly direction towards Giof, passing by the Feluh, zig-

¹ The Bani Hilal were the ancient heroic Badawins of Najd, to whom all unexplained phenomena are attributed. For the legend concerning this, see Blunt's *Pilgrimage to Nejd*, vol. 1, pp. 169-71.

² Huber on his 1880 journey noted, in this same locality, a pile of brushwood, called *Semaihah*, to which "une histoire d'amour" was attached. On his later journey he recorded *Smeiha* as a district name, a little farther to the north.

³ Another great horse-shoe depression in the sand-dunes, noted by Huber—*Ayun Qefia*.

⁴ All other travellers agree as to there being only two hills. Blunt actually climbed one, and would certainly have noticed had there been three. Euting sketched them; Huber corrected Palgrave as to their geological formation, *i.e.* that they are sandstone, not granite; and Wallin says they are "two solitary peaks, so close together as to form one sole base".

zagging between the dunes and trying to keep to the traces of the supposed road.

El-Feluh is the most uneven part of the Nefut, and the most difficult to traverse; it is a succession of steep hills and deep hollows, and it is necessary to twist and turn in all directions, and often to deviate considerably from the true line of march (which is often most difficult to trace) until one finally reaches Mohgean. El-Feluh is crossed in 3 hrs.¹

El-Mohgean is a high barrier of very fine sand, running for many miles from east to west. Desert plants grow here luxuriantly, but they soon wither; the small trees and scrub which one comes across, are always, except in winter, destitute of leaves.

El-Mohgean is recognised by the even line of its summit, and also because, as soon as it is crossed, the undulations of the ground become less, and the desert plants more vigorous; the region between it and El-Benie is given the same name (El-Mohgean) for an 8 hrs. 30 m. march. After 4 hrs. south-east one reaches a valley, considerably deeper than the others in this region. Following it for 10 hrs. to the west it leads to the ruined well of Scegik, or as many pronounce it, Sceghik; it is a well dug by the Anasi-Ruola and ruined by order of Emir Talal-eben-Rascid, who does not wish any water to be found in the Nefut, thereby rendering it a formidable defence on the northern frontier of the Gebel.²

El-Benie is another barrier or broad tableland of very fine sand, from which rise many dunes continually swept by the winds, and consequently of many different shapes.

¹ The region of the *Feluh*, in the Nafud, is indeed the most uneven. Huber remarks that of the whole route between Jauf and Jubba this is the most "tourmentée", holds the deepest sand-pits, the highest dunes, and therefore the most laborious to traverse. The Fuluq, from which the district takes its name, are deep horse-shoe shaped hollows in the sand-bed, which often go down to the rock floor beneath. They lie regularly, with the deepest part of the horse-shoe to the north-west, the sides tailing out towards the south-east, and therefore *across* the traveller's route; hence the difficulty of negotiating them. The last Europeans to cross the Nafud by this route were Huber and Euting in October 1883. One wonders, now that the motor-car has arrived in Arabia, whether this tedious crossing of the sand-bed will not fall into entire disuse.

² Huber complains that Guarmani, usually so exact in his information, did not mention the wells of *Zheri* which lie two hours away in the same low ground; but neither did Palgrave before him nor the Blunts later. Also, it should be remembered that Guarmani was travelling fast with his horses, in fact he made the crossing of the sands in less time than any other traveller. His statement about the wells being ruined is probably incorrect. They are rock-hewn, and therefore difficult to destroy; the Blunts found them in good order and occupied by Ruwalla, while Palgrave had watered there two years before.

Coming down a slight descent from the Benie for 3 hrs. 30 m., one reaches the end of the Nefut sands at a sandy plain which surrounds El-Giof, and extends 6 hrs. 30 m. to the north to the foot of the Hamemie. This range of hills starts 5 hrs. to the west and gradually sinks away to the east until, disappearing from view, it reaches the walls of Scaca.

El-Giof is two hours away from the northern limits of the Nefut sands, and even then another half-hour is needed to enter the precincts of its walls, this extra half-hour being employed in descending from the high plain to the lower ground, from which it takes its name, and where the houses of its inhabitants appear amongst the palm trees. From Gobbah to El-Giof the road is rendered dangerous for travellers in small numbers by the constant raiding expeditions of the nomad tribes of Dafir and Anasi-Ruola. When these meet each other they fight. The Dafir are divided into Said, El-Areif, Ab'edraa, El-Maalim, El-Felu, El-Messamir, all under the leadership of Sheikh Sultan-eben-Suet; they can equip 1,800 horsemen and 3,000 riflemen, and raid from Suk el-Sciuk to the neighbourhood of Scaca, the northern frontiers of the Neged between the territory of the Sciammar and that of the Anasi-Biscir.

The Anasi-Ruolas are formed into two sections: the first and most powerful is under Talal-eben-Feisal-eben-Neief, and is divided into the tribes of El-Kuahbe, El-Togmi, El-Kaagia, El-Ferih, El-Meraho, El-Rebiscian, El-Sciailan, and El-Ghesceb; the second one is under Nahar-eben-Mascehur, his only tribe being El-Mascehur. These nine divisions are of equal strength. Together they have 2,600 horsemen, and double that number of dromedary-riders. The severance of the Mascehur from the Ruola dates from the year 1859; the cause was murder.¹

Before migrating into the Syrian deserts, the four subdivisions of the Anasi—Biscir, Ruola, Uld Ali and Mahalef—decided to divide the region amongst themselves. The Biscir were to be given the eastern El-Hammad and the banks of the Euphrates; the Uld-Ali and Mahalef the western El-Hammad and the frontiers of Syria and Palestine; the Ruola were to have the Uedi-el-Serhan and the northern frontiers of the Hedgiaz and Nejd. The Aleidan of the Uld-Ali and a section of the Uld-Suleiman of the Biscir remained between the Hedgiaz and the Nejd, and were not long in falling under the subjection of the Sciammar.

The great wars waged by the Anasi and Sciammar at the end of the last century and at the beginning of this, aided by the other Beduin tribes of the Nejd, threw back the Ruola to the north of their first positions. The Dafir then were enabled to overrun the territory they had abandoned to

¹ See Appendix XVI.

the east of Giof, while the Scerarat moved into that which they withdrew from on the west. The Ruola were forced to keep to the Central Hammad, serving as a link between the Uld-Ali, the Mahalef and the Biscir; they contrived, in spite of this, to hold El-Giof their tributary until 1853, and went each spring to trade and to collect their taxes in dates.¹

Meanwhile, the Uld-Ali (El Gedalma, El Kamemda and El Messalih), who at first had retreated to the neighbourhood of Damascus, and were friendly with the Turkish authorities, contrived to acquire the right of escorting the Mecca caravan. Besides this, their chief, because of his dealings with the Sublime Porte, was considered the chief of all the Anasi tribes, although they could not furnish more than 900 horsemen.

The invasion of the Uakabites occurred in 1808. The Anasi repulsed at first, retired to the vicinity of Aleppo and Orfa, the Ruola fighting in the rearguard. At last, a victory gained over the invaders by the Sceilan restored courage to the vanquished; the war became more equal, and, after various successes, the Anasi, led by the Sceilan, forced the Uakabites back to the Nejd.

The pasturages occupied by the Uld-Ali proved a sore temptation to the Ruola, and they would not evacuate them. They envied, in short, the honours and advantages which the Turkish authorities accorded to the family of Esmer; this unjust behaviour made all the other Anasi rise against them, with the exception of the Sovualma, a subdivision of the Mahalef, who took their side, and thus started the civil war. The Pashas of Damascus, remembering the Sceilan victories, and flattered by their proposals of submission, elected Feisal el-Sceilan, chief of the Ruola, in place of Mohammed-el-Duhi-eben-Esmer, and thus attracted to himself all the nomads on the side of the Government, and balanced the fortunes of war. In 1859, Bergiaz el-Mascehur, convinced that the cause he upheld was unjust, proposed to withdraw his adherence, but unluckily his idea was discovered. He was taken unawares far from his tent by Feisal and his slaves and killed. Two days later, the Beni-Saker entered the field in support of the Ruola. Mohammed el-Duhi suspended hostilities, and a truce was agreed. Bergiaz's blood was unrevenged. The truce being over, the Biscir, who were at war with the Ghezire Sciammar declared themselves neutral; the Mascehur kept away; the Mahalef of Ahmud-el-Felah (El Hatak, El Bedur, El-Balais, and El-Maagel) reinforced Mohammed el-Duhi with their 700 horsemen; the Sovualma, led by Sheikh Kail-eben-

¹ The date is correct. The Amirs of Hail successfully held their northern outpost until 1920, when the Ruwalla chief Nuri Shalan recovered it temporarily until the coming of the Wahhabis.

Gendal, remained faithful to Feisal el-Sceilan, and sent him their 150 horsemen. The combat began again, and once more the Beni-Saker put an end to it by coming to the rescue of the Ruola, and gaining a victory at Bostra. Feisal became all-powerful; but on the 14th of January of this year, 1864, he was killed in his own tent by Nahar and Kamdan, one a brother and the other a cousin of Bergiaz.¹ On hearing this news the Mascehur fled into the Syrian desert, and penetrated to the Neged, where the Emir Talal-eben-Rascid welcomed them, conceding to them the right to pasture in his lands between El-Giof and Scaca.

After Feisal's death, the Ruola made peace with the Uld-Ali and Mahalef, so these three Anasi subtribes now peacefully graze their herds in the same territories. The first and third tribes are still enemies of the Nejd Sciammar, while on the other hand the Uld-Ali look upon them as allies.

Giof-Amer² is a small town of 6,000 inhabitants. It is built, as are most of the Nejd towns, of sun-baked bricks and layers of sandy earth made into a paste and also baked in the sun, and even some small rough chalk stones taken from the Hamemie.

The city wall, originally enclosing its fourteen quarters, having been destroyed, each quarter now possesses its own wall, like Aneizeh in Cassim, so that it might be said that Giof consists of thirteen villages (since El-Delhamie has been ruined), each one being united to the next by continuous groves of palm trees. But it is less confusing to call it a town, for there are plenty of villages in the vicinity.

The palm groves, from El-Husseni to Dired-Cattab, are planted from west-north-west to east-south-east, and the rest from north-west to south-east. El-Husseni is the first district on the west-north-west, after it come Aal el-Garb, El-Zarai, El-Gait, El-Dera, and Dired-Cattab; in the broader portion of the strip turning towards south-east are El-Selman, El-Habbub, El-Seidan, El-Rakebin, El-Aladge, Ain-Zogba, Kadema and the ruins of El-Delhamie. These districts are almost in a straight line; the whole area occupies a space 50 m. march in length, but in no place more than 10 m. in breadth; the widest point is Dired-Cattab, 20 m. from El-Husseni and 30 m. from the ruins of Delhamie.³

The fort of Mared stands on a sandstone hill, to the south-west of Dired-

¹ See Appendix XVII.

² See note 1, p. 102.

³ Most of these can be identified in Wallin's list of the quarters of Jauf, which he enumerated as twelve, including the recently ruined Delhamie. Huber's list differs slightly from the above, but as he remarks, it is because the same quarter may have a variety of names.

Cattab, abutting on to its houses, and to the south-south-west of El-Dera, to which it is joined by a high wall. It is very ancient and very roughly built. Mared must have been rebuilt several times; the upper part is of baked earth, while the lower two-thirds are of stone. The original shape was rectangular, flanked by four round towers, with a higher tower in the centre from which the surrounding plains could easily be searched. The big tower has fallen into ruins, and the frequent additions, in order to hold it up, have spoilt its former shape.

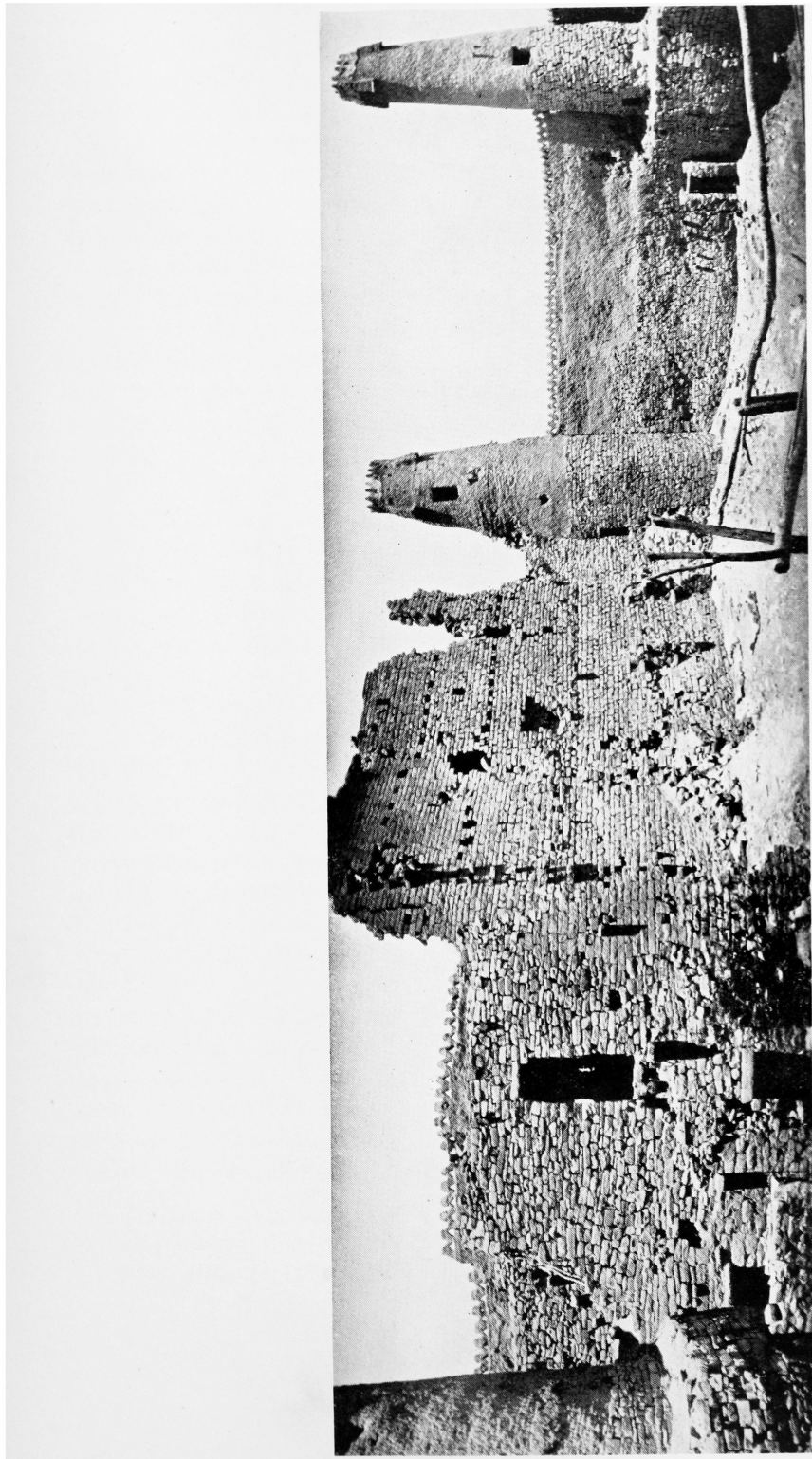
At Kadema there is a spring of the purest water. There are more springs, though slightly salt, to be found in the other quarters, and several wells have been dug in the palm groves and the fields, which produce the same crops as do the Gebel and Teime, as well as the *semek*.

Giof-Amer takes its name from the deep valley (*Giof* in Arabic) in which it is situated, and to the Beni-Amer¹ who constructed it on the site of the ruined Duma el-Gendalie, sometimes called Duma el-Gendal; this ancient town was conquered by Kaled-eben-Walid² and became celebrated for the arbitration which decided the fall of Ali-eben-Abu-Taleb, the greatest Arab warrior of his day.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was governed by chiefs, descendants of a family which came originally from independent villages in the Uedi el-Serhan, who paid tribute, as has already been stated, to the Ruola. In 1853 it was besieged by Talal-eben-Rascid, who took it in spite of an heroic defence lasting twenty days. The Emir, Cattab-eben-Sarra, was taken prisoner and is still alive, a prisoner in irons, in the castle of Kail; while his sons retired to the Uedi el-Serhan, where they built the little village of Uscevuasce, near to Etere and El-Ekder (north-west of Etere and east of El-Ekder).

¹ *Giof-Amer*. The editor of Huber's account of his first visit to Jauf in 1880 repeats his statement that its name originates from the Beni Amir, who built it from ruins of ancient Duma. Shakespear, however, remarks that its name should be "Jauf al Amr, for it was Omar, the second Caliph, who opened the heathen's eyes and made Jauf a town". Philby, on the other hand, says that although the local mosque is attributed to the Caliph Umar, he was definitely told that the full name of the place was Jauf al Amir, but neither name was in use, Amir or Amr; if asked for a full name a native would always give Daumat al Jandal. He thinks that Amir may be a survival of Amurru, *i.e.* Jauf of the West, as opposed to Jauf al Yaman.

² *Kaled-eben-Walid*. Khalid ibn Welid, who earned the title "The sword of God" owing to his fighting qualities, took Jauf for the Moslems, in A.D. 630. It may have been Jauf, or, as some say, Udhruh, where the matter of the succession of the Caliphate was submitted to arbitration. Anyway, Guarmani is right in stating that it sealed the doom of Ali, for he was assassinated a few years later, and, as Hogarth has said, another Messiah found that death availed him more than all the days of his life.



QASR MARID

(By the late Capt. W. H. I. SHAKESPEAR, C.I.E.)

The villages belonging to Gíof are: El-Geraui, El-Gotti, El-Bahirat, and Uedi el-Derbi in the valley; El-Geraui, 20 m. south-west, El Gotti 10 m. east-south-east, Uedi el-Derbi 25 m. north, and El-Bahirat 45 m. north $\frac{2}{3}$ north-north-west from Kadema. Amongst the hills are: El-Hasia, 40 m. west-north-west from El-Husseni; Giawa and El-Mueisen, on the upper plain on the road to Scaca; Giawa is 45 m. and El-Mueisen one hour east-north-east from Uedi el-Derbi.¹

El-Bahirat, Uedi el-Derbi and El-Gotti are built on the rising ground which surrounds El-Gíof; between these two last-named is a pool of rain-water, slightly salt on account of its bed of saline sand. The thirteen quarters of the town of Gíof lie at the foot of the escarpment on the other side of the valley; El-Geraui lies on a small plain above it.

Scaca is a town of 10,000 inhabitants at the foot of the Hamemie; it is 8 hrs. east-north-east from Gíof. The village of Gara is 4 hrs. west-south-west from Scaca, and 2 hrs. south-south-west is Atier. Gara numbers 1,500 inhabitants and Atier about 800.

The Ammal or Governor of Gíof and Scaca is a cousin of Talal-eben-Rascid, named Ahmud-el-Agla.

At 64 hrs. north-west, $\frac{1}{2}$ west-north-west from Gíof lies Kaf, a village of the Uedi el-Serhan; it was ruined in the fifteenth century and rebuilt in the eighteenth, and was at one time a station for caravans plying between Damascus and Medina.

On leaving the gate of El-Husseni, one ascends a gentle incline amongst the hills, until the higher plain is reached; here winter rains have left many pools on the left of the road. The first stage is for 9 hrs. 30 m. to the west, allowing for the inequalities of the ground; after 6 hrs. Gebel el-Daare is seen a quarter of an hour to the right (on to which at 10 hrs. to the north El-Hamemie joins), the remaining 3 hrs. 30 m. are over the first part of the plain which bears its name. During the second part of the stage the road turns north-west for 7 hrs., leaving behind one, after 4 hrs. 35 m., the last rocks south-west of the Daare; after the other 2 hrs. 35 m. one halts at some sand-dunes linking the hills of the Uedi el-Serhan to El-Daare. The hills of the Uedi el-Serhan are reached after continuing the march for 3 hrs. 15 m. to the west-north-west. In another 15 m. to the west, the road being level again, the open mouth of a *bir* or well is found in a rock; this is called El-Scegar; it is full of pestilential water and is surrounded by salt sand, and dominated by hills of chalk and sand covered

¹ These are all correct. *Uedi el-Derbi* is evidently Wallin's *Alwadi*, which he describes as being inherited by two different tribes, one of which is *Dirbe*. Compare *J.R.G.S.* vol. xxiv, 1854, p. 143; also *Bull. Soc. Géog.* vii^{me} Série, vol. v, 1884, p. 321.

with siliceous deposits in the process of disintegration. Fifteen minutes to the west is the mountain of Sbeha, where, hidden under its western flanks, about 1 hr. 20 m. from El-Scegar, is a well of brackish water, but with a less bad smell than that of El-Scegar.¹

If one did not abandon the track leading north-west in order to enter the Uedi el-Serhan close to El-Scegar, the wells of El-Geraui, El-Nebsee, El-Mescisce, Sceba, El-Nebaih and El-Mueisari² would be met at almost equal distances one from the other. The water in these wells can be called drinkable, although the saline taste is very noticeable, as is the smell of camel's dung and urine. The stretch of road from El-Geraui to El-Mueisari is exceedingly dangerous, infested as it often is by the Anasi-Biscir, on *gazzu* against the Scerarat and Sciammar, or in hiding to pounce on poorly protected caravans. A line of hills separates the track from the lower valley of the Uedi el-Serhan, which is bordered on the west by sand and occasional basalt hills, not so high as those of the Tobeit and the Fihe. From the Scegar one marches 9 hrs. west-north-west, 1 hr. north-west, 2 hrs. 15 m. north-north-west, 30 m. north; one is obliged to make this detour on account of the proximity of the hills on the left of the road, the hills on the right gradually receding; thus one arrives 1 hr. 30 m. to the south of the Bir el-Mueisari. The unevenness of the ground increases as far as Bir Ueset, which is reached in 4 hrs. 30 m., one hour to the north-north-west and the remainder to the north-west.

El-Ueset has four openings hidden by mounds of sand, covered with high bushes. One notices about twenty palms (two metres high) near the principal opening; the water there is sweet and yellowish in colour. This is the peculiarity of the water which washes down from all sides in winter; it is due to the fact that it first dissolves the camel's dung and then washes through the sand soaked with their urine, for it is the custom of caravans to halt there to fill their water-skins. At 18 hrs. to the north-north-east the Mesma el-Serhani³ shows its double head, and 24 hrs. east-north-east the crest of Lela is perceived. Ten hours to the west are the mountains separating the Uedi el-Serhan from the Ard el-Suan. At El-Ueset the plain becomes sandy again, but the inequalities of the ground are almost unnoticeable. From the east-north-east to the west-south-west one reckons

¹ The unnamed well under Jabal Subaiha is called Subaiha by Musil, but it might equally be Baqqar or Maiqu.

² In these we can recognise Jarawi, Nabs or Nabk Abu Qasr, Imshash or Mishash, Arfaja, Shaiba, Nbaj and Maisari.

³ *Mesma el-Serhani*, Jabal Misma of the Sirhan to distinguish it from Misma on the Taima-Hail track, is a volcanic crater of the Harra.

the Uedi 30 hrs. march across, and this is its greatest width. Its principal tributaries all converge on this point.

The road continues for 9 hrs. 30 m. north-north-west, skirting for 45 m., without changing its course, the base of a line of basalt hills which come in from the north-east and swing to the north, without, however, crossing the road. The track returns to the plain, more undulating than before, and leads 1 hr. 10 m. north-north-west, then 3 hrs. 45 m. north-west, leaving on the left the Bir el-Meheder—a saline well, less disagreeable in odour than the Scegar—and it then descends gradually 50 m. north-north-west till it reaches the salt marshes.

It is 2 hrs. 45 m. north-west and 1 hr. north-north-west to Bir el-Adeimat; and another 2 hrs. 30 m. north-north-west to Bir Abu-Terrifian. Between this last well and Kseba spring (an hour on) the camel's feet are always slipping on the salt-encrusted sand sodden by the rains of winter and the dew in summer. Without an expert guide one runs great risk of falling every minute into the quagmires, which, covered with a thin crust of salt, intersect the tracks across the marshes in every direction.

El-Adeimat, Abu-Terrifian and Kseba are in three oases frequented by snakes and wild cattle; the water is excellent. At Kseba there is a fort, fourteen metres square, of recent construction but not yet inhabited. Ain el-Bede can be seen at 6 hrs. to the east $\frac{1}{2}$ east-south-east, where the road from Geraui, which traverses the Uedi el-Serhan from the south-east to the north-west, turns off towards the hills of the north of Kseba.

These last-named hills are entirely basaltic; as their flanks are not yet worn away they have no sand at the base, as most of those had which we met with both before and after. Going on for 30 m. beyond Kseba, a steep ascent is climbed and from the top El-Magal¹ is seen away to the north.

Kaf is then 3 hrs. 30 m. distant to the north-west, the path twisting and turning continually through dry, sandy valleys so as to avoid the mountains and great basalt rocks which form a natural barrier, veritable fortifications, where the villagers of this region find a refuge from the sudden incursions of the Beduin.

Kaf, also called Diret el-Rababe, resembles the villages of the Gebel and Giof, except that the earth used for the houses, towers and outside walls is of a lighter colour, and its palms, possibly from the salt exhalations from the neighbouring marshes, are less healthy and productive. It is built on the edge of some saline marshes, the best in the Uedi, at the

¹ The volcanic craters of Maqqal.

southern foot of Saidi,¹ a mountain which had once been crowned by a stone fort, not even now entirely ruined; it had been built, it is said, by an Egyptian from Said who had acquired a safe passage from the Mecca caravans. These caravans, on account of the many springs found in the neighbourhood and in Kaf, had made it one of their halting-places.²

Said is about 10 m. from Kaf and is reached by a steep path; it is isolated from the other basaltic and sandy outcrops which surround the villages and form a crescent round Kaf.

Kaf has 250 inhabitants and is 1 hr. 30 m. north-north-east from Akeile, a new village built on a mound in the marshes and numbering only fifteen souls; this village is 3 hrs. north from El-Gotti, which has 150 inhabitants and is partly in ruins, as a great number of its inhabitants recently left it to establish themselves in Giof-Amer, where they have built a village of the same name, situated 10 m. east-south-east from Kadema.

On the eastern slopes of the hills looking towards the least important side of the saline marshes there are three more villages: El-Ekder,³ 1 hr. 45 m. east-south-east of Kaf, El-UScevuasce, and Etera at 2 hrs. east-south-east. Etera is built of stone and has 300 inhabitants. El-UScevuasce has 200 and El-Ekder 150; thus the population of the six Uedi el-Serhan villages does not exceed 1065.⁴

The crops, except the *semek*, are the same as at Giof, and the industry is the same as in Teime; besides this there is the salt, which the Beduin buy for a "thaler megidi" per camel's load. Although they do not recognise the right of the villagers to sell it, considering it their own property, yet they pay the "megidi", as they say, "to save themselves the trouble of fetching and loading it".

El-Magal, or Gebel el-Magal, is 2 hrs. 45 m. to the north-east of Kaf.

From El-Akeile one must allow 29 hrs. to reach Galeite, thus: 10 hrs. to the west, crossing the marshes, 14 hrs. to the north-west over the Ard el-Suan, and 5 hrs., also north-west, through to Belka.

¹ Qasr Saidi. See sketches in Euting's *Inner-Arabien*, vol. I, pp. 47, 71, 72; also *J.R.G.S.* vol. LXII, pp. 245-6.

² Huber doubts this. See his criticisms, *Bull. Soc. Géog.* VII^{me} Série, vol. v, 1884, pp. 311-12.

³ *El-Ekder*, a village 1½ hours to the east-south-east of Kaf, is not known under that name, but there are the two settlements of Minwa and Qarqar in that direction.

⁴ Huber also criticises Guarmani's estimates of these populations. We have seen that Guarmani is usually in excess, but it must also be taken into consideration that the population of these salt villages fluctuates considerably.

APPENDICES

I

THE *duar* is an encampment placed in a sort of circle. The ropes of the tents are interlaced, tent with tent, leaving a single opening for the flocks returning from pasture; these are placed in the centre, where they spend the night. This entrance is generally either next the chief's tent or the one reserved for guests. The *duar* is adopted by all the nomadic tribes in the mountains, and, in the desert, by all the nomad husbandmen. The greater tribes of the Arabian-Syrian deserts arrange their tents in long lines, separated one from the other according to the space required for the flocks belonging to each tent-owner.

In the encampments in line, the tents are never closed except on the side exposed to the wind; a few shepherds always sleep in the open amongst the herds.

The shepherds are invariably part-proprietors, or hirelings; if hirelings, they are fed and dressed, and are also given annually a young camel, but of a different sex each year.

II

The Kalaat el-Merd is situated on a hill detached from the western chain of the Begheia mountains. In shape it is like the Frank mountain, the ancient Herodium, with a flat-topped summit now covered with ruins. Coming from the south, it is ascended on the left side, beginning the ascent at the reservoirs cut out of the rock and divided by a wall partly formed by the rock itself. Near the reservoirs there is a great well, and on the plateaux and ridges of the mountains opposite, there are still visible traces of an aqueduct which, in addition to rain-water, must have contributed to the filling of these cisterns.

The ancient convent showed none of its former greatness. The pavement of its church was mosaic, composed of cubes of about two centimetres each, a coarse mosaic of the same design as that in the Church of the Greek Seminary of Santa Croce, 20 m. from Jerusalem, discovered by me in 1852; I found it had afterwards been covered over with earth by the Taamri. It can be easily seen by digging away the earth, to a palm's depth, towards the east, either at the other side of the large receptacle which serves as a baptismal font, or a few steps from the fine rectangular well of Roman cement to the north of the caves which contained (as one

beneath still does) the tombs of the monks. The cave containing the tombs opens on to the south side of the hill; there are eight of them, four in a row, which were shut down by large stone slabs resembling the pavement of the cave. No outward mark showed it to be a burial place, a precaution which has not, however, prevented its violation at the present day, and perhaps will not prevent the ultimate destruction of the convent itself.

The ruins of the sacred edifice show that it belongs to the early centuries of the Christian era. It is close to the renowned bay-tree of Saint Saba; doubtless many authors have spoken of this tree, but I have personally never found any mention of it except one of the most foolish kind in "The Spiritual Field of the Holy Fathers", by an Alexandrian writer, Abbot G. Evera.

III

Exasperated by the annoyances inflicted on them by the local authorities, the Taamri often rebel against the Government. They then retire for safety into the most secluded valleys of the Judæan desert on the other side of the Uedi el-Deregeh, in the territory of the Rasceide and Gehalin. For this reason, the Taamri may refuse to go farther into the northern Gor and to cross the Jordan, and may instead propose to go by Kerak, in order to reach the Beni-Hamde on the right bank of the Mogebe, or to go direct to the Beni-Saker by the villages of El-Tafle, Haime, Soufhe and Dana, where the guides would know the locality well and would be aware of the exact positions of the Beni-Saker encampments according to the time of the year. Both propositions should be declined.

Refusing the Taamri, you must request an escort from the Ehteim-Semana of Abu-Euser, or Kedgiaage of Abu-Fed, re-enforcing them with Sauakari.

The Ehteim are two tribes of Santoni, dervishes or "marabouts". They have twenty horsemen and 400 riflemen and are not of the same origin as the Neged Ehteim. Their grazing lands are to the north of those belonging to the Sauakari el-Uedi on the declivities of the mountains of Palestine in the Gor.

The Jordan must be crossed above the Augeh, opposite the territory of the Aduan who, when you reach them, will provide a *rafik* to cross the Belka from north to south. One starts from the territory of the Beni-Hassen, the irreconcilable enemies of the Beni-Saker since the young Sheikh Rumeah-eben-Soliman-el-Feizi killed their chief, Sheikh Ahmet-el-Callal.

The Ehteim chiefs, respected on account of their religious character by

the Aduan and other inhabitants of the Belka, are a sufficient safeguard for the lives and property of travellers whom they escort, though without sparing them the taxes and passage dues which the various tribes levy on all those who are not Beduin. Although on friendly terms with the Beni-Hamde, they have less influence with them than have the Taamri.

I always dissuade travellers from accepting the proposals of the Taamri, so as to avoid possible encounters with enemy tribes, knowing the troubles others have experienced at the hands of the Megelli clan of Kerak.

The Taamri are on sufficiently good terms with the Rasceide of En-Gaddi, with the Gehalin of the mountains of Ebron, and with the Kaabneh (a subdivision of those of the Belka) of Gebel Usdum, to be able to go freely as far as the south of the Dead Sea; but there they would probably meet with the Maasa and Keilat, the Cataue, Mesaid, Tehat, Amran, Haueitat, and the Haueitat el-Faraage, Dullam, Azezemeh, Kagehia, and many other Beduin, not counting the Gauarani; so that if one managed to escape from the one there would always be a risk of falling into the hands of the others, of being robbed of everything, and being forced to return; one would, however, never be killed, except in actual battle.

Let us leave the road of the nomads alone!

Sheikh Mohammed el-Megelli rules at Kerak. He is a man destitute of honour and renowned for his cruelty. The following facts will make his character better understood and will show why no one trusts him.

The peasants of Tafié and the neighbouring villages used to pay tribute to the Sheikh of Kerak, considering themselves his vassals; they also paid tribute to the Beni-Saker who protected them from the raids of the other Beduins.

In the recent wars, the Megelli had been unable to defend them from the attacks of their enemies, while the Beni-Saker, on the contrary, always made themselves respected. The Sheikh of Tafié, therefore, Abdalla-el-Haura, in accord with the chiefs of the other villages, decided to renounce vassalage, but agreed to send the Megelli as an act of homage (no longer a tribute) an annual present of more or less value; this present, however, was never to be of the same kind, lest it should constitute a right. It was also agreed every peasant family should, as in the past, pay the Beni-Saker three measures of oil, one of butter, two of grain, two of barley, and so many goat-skins, equal to linen sufficient to make twenty-four pieces of *scekká*, twelve for the Sheikh Feizi of the Tuha and twelve for the Kreisce of the Kaabneh.

Mohammed el-Megelli tried to maintain his ancient right by force of arms; the peasants led by Haura prepared to fight, and the result would

have been hard to foretell had not the Beni-Saker intervened and prevented the combat. They settled that the "homage" was to be paid as tribute, though without any increase in value. Both sides, being apparently pacified, retired. One of the Feizi Sheikhs, Scelasce el-Bechit, went as guarantee for the contract. Six months afterwards (January 1864) Abdalla el-Haura, who had perfect faith in Megelli's sincerity, went to Kerak to visit the Sheikh and for three days received every hospitality. Presents were showered upon him; he was dressed in a robe of honour, and he was bidden farewell with every sign of affection, and—was assassinated at the town gate.

Not content with having betrayed his guest, Megelli called his people together, surprised Tafié and made himself master of it; this he did to all the other villages, turning out all those who refused to acknowledge him as their master. In place of the murdered Haura, he appointed a chief of his own side, Sheikh Gheblan el-Mekeisen.

The refugees took shelter in the tents of the Beni-Saker, who immediately declared war on the Kerakie and on their allies, the Kagiehie, at Naimat. Scelasce el-Bahit attacked the partisans of Megelli, and, in spite of the fine defence of Sheikh Gheblan, scattered them. Two hundred Feizi horsemen made an attack on Kerak without succeeding in dislodging the defenders. The Tiaha, who wished to avenge old wrongs, sent 2,000 riflemen on dromedaries to the Feizi, who did not consider it worth while sending any more from their own tribes.

The Kerakie, being unable to leave their fortress, were beginning to lack food; their herds, deprived of pasturage, were languishing, and a revolt was imminent, with Sheikh Aleian at the head of the malcontents. Megelli, seeing the danger, and, being as cowardly as he was cruel, without even attempting a battle, surrendered secretly in the night to Fendi el-Feizi, chief of the Tuhas, and contrived to get pardon for his infamous behaviour without any worse conditions than the repatriation of the refugees on both sides, and the acknowledgment of Abdalla el-Haura's son as chief of Tafié.

If, instead of the road going past the villages, the Kerak road be chosen, the peasants serving as guides as far as the Beni-Saker encampments can give no true guarantee of safety; and, should they pretend to do so, they would be found powerless to enforce it in the event (a rare one, it is true) of tribes, friendly or otherwise, being encountered between their villages and the Beni-Saker. A visitor arriving at the tent of some powerful sheikh of the Tuha or Kaabneh, without previous acquaintanceship or recommendations other than those of the peasants, their subjects (for the Taamri would have had to return to their *duar* from Tafié), would be, as Beduin

say, "under the cord which protects travellers", for, as the Beni-Saker have no blood vows with any other tribes, they could not be threatened in the event of an accident, nor could any revenge be taken for the blood of a *rafik*, if killed, nor could any demand be made for the return of his property, if robbed. One had better place oneself entirely in the hands of Providence, certainly the best guardian, and travel according to God's will. Of two evils, the less is to be preferred; it is better to expose oneself to insolence and annoyance from the Megelli. The Beni-Hamide are at the gates of Kerak, and sooner or later would avenge any insult offered to the Taamri, or to anyone they were escorting, especially if the travellers were recommended to them personally; and, should they be overtaken and robbed, they would find means of indemnifying them from the wealth of Kerakie herds which graze on their plateau.

The following itinerary may be of help if needed.

Leaving Jerusalem by the Jaffa or Ebron Gate (Bab el-Kalil), one must descend into the Valley of Gihon, or of the "Sons of Himmon", which is crossed at, or below, the Greek Chapel of St George. Here, it is said, repose the mortal remains of SS. Cosimus and Damianus, martyred in the third century, and whom fourteen years ago or so, during a journey to the Ansari, I heard were reputed to be buried in the mountains of Antiochia on the road leading from Dafne, Beit el-Ma, to Suedie.

Leaving the lower fish pond of Gihon, the Aceldama rocks ("ac-el-dem") and the mountain of "evil counsel" on the left hand, and on the right hand the road of Saint Elias across the plain of Rephaim, the Sur-Bahil track must be taken as far as the village itself, situated above the valleys of Em-Tuba and Saleh, and entirely inhabited by Moslems. The valley of Saleh is the ancient Uedi-Luca; it ends at the foot of Siar el-Ganem, where the Taamri-Saade territories begin.

The Em-Tuba valley contains the ruins of an Essene Monastery (Coenobite) and also of a larger Christian one. The first dates from the century of the birth of Christ. The second dates from the sixth century, and was built by St Marinus above the subterranean oratory of St Mary of Cleophas, the mother of the beatified Em el-Tubanie, whence the title "Mother of the Glorification" or Em-Tuba. The Saint passed the latter years of her life in this small subterranean chapel or oratory in the valley which now contains her sepulchre. The chapel had been preserved intact up to now and was of a square shape with a vaulted roof, the arches of the vault resting on two columns in the centre. After I had discovered it, a report spread that treasure was hidden there, and Moroccan Arabs, commonly called Mogrebis, broke the two columns and demolished part of the roof,

and the chapel is now full of ruins. The inhabitants of Sur-Bahil closed up the entrance, but if anyone has the curiosity to visit it, the entrance may be found a few steps to the south of the baptismal fonts, in the first wall on the west, where recent repairs are to be seen.

In the Uedi-Saleh, formerly Uedi-Luca, there is a well of the name of Bir Luca. This well, with a few white mosaic fragments scattered in the little field surrounding it, marks the site of the convent which the Abbot Luke, according to St Cyril, built "circa vicum Melopa", near to that of his co-disciple, St Marinus. To the south is Siar el-Ganem, the enclosure for flocks and herds; there are still to be seen the foundations of the tower of the flocks, the Migdal-Eder of the book of Genesis, the Pyrgos Poemnion of the Septuagint, on the other side of which the patriarch Jacob pitched his tent after the death of Rachel; also, the Poemnion of the early Fathers, the sheep-pen of the Jews. To this day the Arabs of the neighbouring Bet-Sakur shelter their herds in these caves in winter; the tower alone is missing, and its name has never changed.

A few metres to the north (about 26), at the foot of the tower on the rock above the principal cave, I discovered, in the year 1852, the ruins of the convent dedicated to the Angel who appeared to the Shepherds, on the night of the birth of our Saviour. My discovery created a great stir, for it destroyed certain false traditions in the Holy Land. The Deir el-Rahauat, the Convent of the Shepherds of Bet-Sakur, became once more merely the Convent of Saint Posidonius, mentioned by Palladius. At the same time, other archæologists proved beyond doubt that the Emmaus of the Gospels was not El-Kubebe but Ammuas; that the Fountain of St Philip was Ain Kalkul instead of Ain Hanie; and that the Church of the Stoning of Saint Stephen was to the north and not to the east of Jerusalem.

Neither in Arabia, Syria, nor Palestine have I ever found a double tradition for facts relating to a period before Christ; nor any (non-Christian) which one could not find mentioned in history. The double or false traditions all belong to the Christian era! They are the result either of imaginative, fanatical minds, or of the ignorance and presumption of Europeans who, from the time of the Crusades, have propagated their errors in the East, pretending to correct *truth*, which they knew not, and of which their atheistic ideas did not even admit the existence; or perhaps of a determination to create a new "knowledge" at any cost. In this way they determined that the Virgin Mary was born at Nazareth, whereas she was really born at Jerusalem, and that her son Jesus was born in Bethlehem; they preferred the ashes of St Mary of Cleophas to be buried at Ramle, when all the time they were reposing peacefully in the oratory

at Em-Tuba; while the Stations of the Cross, almost all of European invention, no longer attract, through the streets of the Holy City, any veneration from the Christians of Eastern rites. We may expect soon to be shown in the valley of Jehoshaphat the tomb of Balaam's ass, an animal which possessed far more sense than many of the wiseacres of our day!

I beg forgiveness for this digression, being unable to forgo my desire to show a little of the scope of my archæological researches, all the more because they are actually on the road to be taken on this journey, and therefore may render it more interesting to some.

The desert begins to exert its influence at the foot of Siar el-Ganem. The Taamri come to Bethlehem, where their provisions are deposited by day, if they are at peace with the Government, and by night, if at war. Instead of taking the public road, fearing an encounter with irregular troops, they go by the valleys of Genab and Assafir; their returning tracks can be seen on the ground, and these should be followed in order to find their tents, unless it is thought preferable to ascend the Em el-Talah, the highest mountain in the Judæan desert, which rises at a short distance from the Siar and commands a vast expanse to the horizon. But even one who is used to those solitudes must not think that he can be sure of the exact spot where the flocks are grazing in the daytime, nor that the position of the *duar* to which they will return at night can be found for certain. On the Em el-Talah, the ascent to which begins a few minutes after passing the sepulchre of Sheikh Ssa, there is a well in perfect preservation beneath the ruins of an ancient Hebrew tower; and on the southern side there is a cave which must once have been very deep. This gives credence to the tradition, held by the nomads, that King David was found hidden there when Saul entered it to rest.

Returning to the question of employing an escort of Tiaha and not of the Beni-Hamide; instead of taking a Taamri-Saade escort from Sheikh Ismail Hamdan, it is better to get one from the Agiaage, Sheikh Safi-Zir.

From the land of the Taamri that of the Gehalin is reached; and with Abu-Duak, their chief, or some of his relatives, the Dullam territory may be entered, whence one descends into the desert, south of Palestine, to the encampments of the Tiaha, allies of the Haueitat and Beni-Saker, joining thus the Beni-Saker to the Tiaha, the Tiaha to the Dullam, and the Dullam to the Gehalin, and Taamri, passing from one to the other, both in going and coming.

IV

The *Rafik* ought to belong to a family of chieftains, or must be a dependent of theirs. He has the right to protect a certain number of persons (who each pay a sum for his services), provided they all start together bound for the same destination and none have a blood feud with his tribe. But as it sometimes happens that several caravans place themselves in the hour of danger under the protection of a *rafik* and thus escape spoliation at the hands of his allies, no *rafik* is now to be found who will undertake the safety of more than four persons, other than Beduin, and if he should do so, the travellers must take every precaution not to be molested. Whatever number, however, the *rafik* does undertake to protect, those whom he actually holds by the hand to introduce will be considered inviolable. Any two strangers, therefore, possessing no connection with nomads, will need a *rafik*. The *rafik* cannot be sure of protecting his rights with the Anaso-Biscir unless he is strongly escorted, although he can have the chiefs punished if he can recognise them and be compensated for any harm suffered.

V

On reaching an encampment the guest tent may be recognised from the position it occupies; if the camp is in a straight line, it is on one side, a little separated from the rest; if the encampment is in *duar*, it is near the opening left for the flocks.

Travellers should approach it making a wide circuit, and stopping and dismounting near tent-pegs on the side closed against the wind. If the chief be rich, slaves or a Beduin retainer will come out to meet the strangers to assist them and carry in their travelling bags. Other Beduin or perhaps the chief's sons will instantly spread carpets, cushions and camel-saddles on which, after the usual salutations, they are invited to rest. Should the travellers arrive on foot, and water not be scarce, they wash their own feet, for the washing of guests' feet was never a Beduin custom, nor indeed was it practised in biblical times. In fact, one reads in Genesis xviii, 4 that Abraham said to the Angels: "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched and wash your feet", and not "*I* will wash your feet". If the chapter is read to the ninth verse, substituting "camel", "sheep", "lamb", "goat" or "kid" for "calf", one will understand, better than ever my pen could tell, the treatment guests receive in the nomad tents. What the Holy Scriptures do not say, and what the Beduin regard as of the greatest importance, is that those of highest rank and greatest repute must never

cease eating until they see that those of lesser rank near them are fully satisfied.

The following day at dawn, the travellers should send by a servant all the presents destined for the chief, to the tent reserved for women. On seeing the chief afterwards, one should not mention this, whilst he is not obliged to offer a word of thanks in return; if, however, he is pleased with the gifts, it will be known directly by the signs of friendship and services he will show, and although custom permits three days of hospitality to elapse before discussing business, it would be advisable to apprise him at once of the object of the journey. The gifts most appreciated are firearms.

To kill a camel, they lay him down and bind his legs so that he cannot rise. His neck is then bent back towards the hump against which his head is firmly held, whilst a knife is inserted in the chest below the point where the neck joins.

VI

A dromedary costs from 50 to 100 "thaler megidi". It must be of pure breed and sufficiently advanced in age; this last condition is indispensable for a long and dangerous journey, for a well-bred dromedary of full age never lets his voice be heard and, therefore, does not show the enemy the resting-place by night, nor do they recognise his footsteps by day.

VII

The Beduin dress is too well known to need any description by me. All Beduin dress in the same manner, and it is impossible to distinguish them in a "mêlée" except by their cries. I used to think that their *abah* or cloaks, and the camel-skin cords attaching their *keffiehs* might serve to distinguish the different tribes. I observed that the camel-hair cord is sometimes of loose threads only tied together every centimetre, when it is called *aakal*. Sometimes the strings are plaited and it is then called *gedile*. I noted, too, that the loose strings are always of the same colour, while those which bind them together may be of the same or of a different hair, and the cords of the *gedile* may be either the same or of various colours. I have seen *abah* in white, in black and brown, and, more usually, white and blue stripes; these are called *zraki*; the white and brown, *mebede*; white and almost black, *barka*. As the black stripes become brown in time, it is not by the colour that they can be known, but by the proportion of their stripes, and because they have an equal number of white and dark stripes on the back, whilst in the *mebede* the dark one in the centre is equal to four of the side stripes. It was some time before I noticed that, without

being used more by one tribe than another, the Neged Beduin prefer the *aakal* to the *gedile*, and the *abah mebede* to the *barka*; the northern Beduin, on the contrary, prefer the *abah barka* and *gedile*, though they all use both indifferently. My first theory was destroyed after my early journeys, when I had increased my knowledge of the desert.

VIII

The aim of the *Gazzu* is to take an enemy by surprise. The Sheikh who wishes to make himself the *achide* or commandant of the expedition appoints the place and the day of meeting, without saying which direction he means to take or which enemy he intends to attack; in fact often he does not know it himself. His warriors come on horse and dromedary; they are counted and, according to their numbers, they decide on the scope of the expedition, the tribe to attack and the direction to take. The *achide* has the right to all the mares taken from the enemy except those belonging to a horseman killed fighting, which belong to whoever killed him. For the other mares he gives a camel in exchange for each one taken; and he can also choose whatever he likes from the rest of the booty or can distribute it amongst his followers, according to his generosity.

The *achide's* war-cry on the point of attacking a caravan or encampment is intended to make his identity known; but to avoid crying his own name, for this would be a sign of pride, the name of his sister or one of his most intimate and well-known female relatives is called. The name of "Aku Giosa", or "Brother of Giosa", which is adopted by Kamed-eben-Beneie of the Sceilan, is the terror of all the nomads on the frontiers of Neged, for he spends all his time in raiding that territory which formerly belonged to the Ruola.

IX

The *Redgem* is a heap of rough stones piled up to commemorate some event. The traveller in the East comes across them everywhere and the traditions which they yield would perhaps make good various gaps in history. The first rather important *redgem* to be noticed on leaving Jerusalem is about 150 metres to the north of Rachel's tomb, the little edifice which takes the place of the eleven stones, the only monument erected by Jacob to his wife. This *redgem* marks the place of the massacre of Sciakir-Aga, Governor of Bethlehem, by the Taamri in 1858 and also of his temporary grave.

It happened in this way. Several Taamri having been placed under arrest in Bethlehem, Surreia-Pasha, who was then Governor of Palestine,

ordered Sciakir-Aga to conduct them to Jerusalem, where they were to be imprisoned. Sciakir-Aga obeyed. While escorting the prisoners with 20 irregular cavalry he was attacked by over 100 Taamri on the road, commanded by Safi-Zur, one of their chiefs. The Government cavalry fled, the prisoners were freed, and Sciakir-Aga, who alone had the courage to fight, fell a victim to his pluck and duty. He was buried where he fell. After a few days his body was dug up again and transported to the family tomb at Jerusalem. All those present at the exhumation of the body laid a few stones on the empty grave. Since then no one passes by without adding another to the heap. Each day the *redgem* grows bigger, and thus the name of Sciakir-Aga will go down to posterity. In passing this *redgem*, where Sciakir Aga died the death of the brave, one is reminded of the stone which Jacob raised and dedicated to the Eternal Father at Bet-el about 3,500 years ago, and of the one he heaped up at Galaad as a witness of his compact with Laban, his father-in-law, besides the eleven stones laid over the tomb of Rachel, his beloved wife.

X

The *semek*, a small edible weed, comes up in the early days of spring in small green tubular branches, the shape of spindles, filled with a watery pulp, gritty and shiny. It ripens in summer, when the tubes become yellow and the hollow cylinders support a flower with a flattened prism, containing egglike cells full of tiny seeds of a reddish colour; these are covered over with small scales fringed with hairs, the hairs being attached to the upper lateral half of the prism, converging towards the centre and preventing the seeds from falling. The flower is one centimetre in diameter, and the whole plant never exceeds fifteen centimetres, covering the same area of ground.

I believe the *semek* belongs to a species of edible plants quite distinct from any at present known, for it cannot be reproduced by cultivation, even in the regions where it grows; at all events, no method of reproduction is there known. The Scerarat Arabs and the inhabitants of Giof-Amer, therefore, seeing no natural reason for this, assert that the plant is some strange product of the dew.

When the flowers of the *semek* are gathered, they are thrown into large receptacles of water and left to soak until the scales of the flower open and let out the seeds. These are then dried in the sun, ground up, and make a passable bread, or a delicious pudding, and are excellent if merely sprinkled on dates.

XI

A wife is either bought, or given as a present. Her price is one or two camels, the value being according to her social position and not according to her personal merits.

A girl is never forced by the Beduin to accept a husband she does not fancy. The father never accepts any proposal before a concerted sign assures him of his daughter's consent.

When a young man wishes to be married, he presents himself at the tent of the father of his future bride with a kid. He makes his proposal, suggesting a price, which is increased as necessity compels; directly it is settled and the father exclaims "God bless thee", the young man rises, kills the kid, prepares the tent for the bride and the marriage is consummated.

Marriages without payment occur amongst relatives in the families of sheikhs. The price of a sheikh's daughter, not related to her future husband, is 100 "thaler megidi", a mare and at least ten camels.

A young woman, may, notwithstanding her own consent, have her marriage forbidden by her parents. Nothing remains then, if she intends to marry, but to fly with her lover. If she is caught before finding refuge with some powerful chief, she is killed. If she reaches safety, she is received by the women-folk, and examined to be sure that she has not brought dishonour to the tribe she has chosen to protect her. If she is found to be a virgin, a kid is instantly killed and she is put in the same tent as her lover. If, however, the women find that she is not a virgin she is thrown out of the encampment with execrations, together with her companion, who receives even more violent abuse. While the two doves are cooing in blissful love, the father of the young man makes an agreement with the girl's parents and settles a price, an obligatory compensation for the elopement and another one for the consummation.

Sometimes the girl's parents refuse to consider the consummated marriage as valid and demand the restitution of their daughter. In such a case, if they can get her back, they do not ill-treat her. If she has a child, whether male or female, it belongs to the father as soon as it is weaned and can stand.

XII

The Beduin of the Great Syrian Arabian Desert class (wrongly) as "Tiaha" all the Arabs wandering between the mountains of Arabia Petræa and the confines of Egypt, and from the southern frontiers of Palestine to Gebel

el-Tih in the peninsula of Sinai. This wide region is overrun by sixteen tribes without counting the Tauarah. The real Tiaha are divided into two sections at enmity with each other, "Iemeni" and "Keisi".

Tribe	Place	Cav.	Inf.
1 Tiaha	(1) El-Alamat	110	400
	(2) El-Ekderat	}	800
	El-Ekhuk		
2 Arab-Gaza	El-Manakia	70	180
	El-Melelka	60	140
	El-Ertemat	50	100
	El-Dgebarat	100	200
3 El-Kanageri	El-Kamadat	}	120
	El-Badarin		
4 El-Enserat		10	20
5 El-Catatue		110	200
6 El-Maaza-u-El-Keilat		—	1,200
7 El-Mesaid		80	250
8 El-Tehat		100	1,000
9 Dullam		80	1,000
10 El Amran		—	1,000
11 El Haueitat		—	270
12 El-Haueitat	"El-Faraagi"	300	2,000
13 El-Azezemeh-el-Mehammedir		200	400
14 Terabin	El-Guali	—	—
	El-Duabha	—	—
	El-Neimat	—	—
	El-Nebat	}	1,700
	El-Aksar		
	El-Gerauin		
15 El-Suarka	(1) El-Aradat	40	100
	(2) El-Dehemat	}	420
	El-Mahafis		
	El-Maragede		
	El-Resceidet		
	(3) El-Ammarin	}	160
	El-Kanasara		
	El-Zeidet		
	(4) El-Mansurin	30	280
	(5) El-Makauin	—	130
	(6) El-Makata	7	105
16 El-Remelet	El-Scemelka	}	440
	El-Sceratin		
	El-Ammarin-abu-Freha		

The "Tiaha", really Beni-Atie enemies of the Scerarat, are the Maaza-u-el-Keilat (Sheikh Salem-eben-Atie) and not the Alamat of Soliman-eben-Atie, although these also often make raids in the Hedgiaz and on the frontiers of Neged.

XIII

After the retreat of the Egyptian troops, Sheikh el-Mesceri killed Terki-eben-Sehud, obliging his son Feisal to seek refuge with the Beni-Kahtan, and declared himself Sovereign of the Neged. The Sciammar refused to recognise his right; the Emir Abdalla-eben-Rascid called up all the Beduin to make a raid against Mesceri in Aared, and, taking him unawares, put him to death. Feisal then seized the reins of government, and rewarded Emir Abdalla by pardoning the murder of the Emir Saleh-eben-Ali and allowing him to retain his conquests.¹

XIV

When winter is past, many of the Saleib cross the Euphrates to hunt the wild ass in Mesopotamia, there being no more of these now in the Hammad. They take a certain number of them alive to breed with their own. The male offspring are eventually castrated, and sold at the age of two years for as much as 200 "thaler megidi" each.²

XV

The success of the Aneizeh rebellion produced an immense and unforeseen upheaval in Central Arabia. After having assured the independence of Cassim and of the nomad Arabs of the border territories, the Emir Zamel wished to impose a stricter religious reform than that of Abd el-Uakab. Islamism was to give way to pure deism. The change prescribed by Abd el-Uakab threw doubts on the divinity of Mahomet's mission; that of the Emir Zamel denied the divinity of the Koran and of all sacred writings, and called men to observe a natural religion in its simplest form. Had he not had the double object of independence, and a religious revival rather than reform—or at least if he had contrived to hide the second part of his project till he had succeeded in the first—he would not have found himself alone in his struggle against Feisal-eben-Sehud and Talal-eben-

¹ An authentic account of what actually happened is given in Philby's *Arabia*, pp. 108–9.

² Guarmani's information is perfectly correct, contrary to the statements of more recent writers. The wild ass (*Equus hemippus*) had long since disappeared from the Syrian Hamad, but was still to be found in the desert north of the Euphrates, in the vicinity of Jabal Sinjar.

Rascid; he might have been able to consolidate his power to conquer, perhaps, as he planned, all the seven Negeds, and, following the system of his predecessors, Mahomet and Abd el-Uakab, could have imposed his religious beliefs with the point of the sword. An excess of zeal proved his ruin! The princes of the Cassim, whom he had apprised of his intentions, were alarmed at the consequences which would obviously result, and in spite of his exhortations, although they did not have the courage to oppose him, they declined to give him any sort of aid. The Beduin tribes would not have deserted him, and probably with their help alone he might have succeeded to a great extent, had not the gold offered by other Neged princes roused them from their lethargy towards Mohammedanism. The Emir Zamel, abandoned by all, was vanquished; but the heroic resistance of Aneizeh proved to the inhabitants of the Cassim that the actual rulers of the Neged could not fight against them if they held together; and that Emir Zamel, more influential than ever, might yet have a greater success in echoing the cry of Isaiah (xiv, 14) throughout Central Arabia, "Except God there is no other God"; and, reducing mosques and minarets to ruins, he would persuade the Arabs to adore the Eternal Father without "oloma-mesceik" intermediaries under the great vault of heaven.

Here follows the Creed of the Emir Zamel, Sheikh of Aneizeh, in Cassim:

"Oh Believers! there is no other divinity but God—the undivided, omnipotent, merciful Creator of the universe, by reason of His Will.

"Deny the existence of angel, 'djin', 'afrit', and devil; for the Creator has no need of intermediary spirits between Himself and His children.

"Deny the divine origin of all writings, the Koran, Bible and the Gospels; for the Book of God is read in his works.

"Oh Believers! predestination is for all created, free arbitration is conceded to you, guided by your intelligence; yet all is in God's hands and none can evade the final Destiny.

"Believe that your body which is of the earth will return to the earth, whilst your souls which are of God will return to God who gave them.

"Believe that each one will receive reward or punishment according to his deserts; for evil evil, and for good, even better—the punishment in proportion to the crime, but the reward eternal, because you are frail and God is merciful.

"Oh Believers! Turn not a deaf ear to the warning voice of your heart if you stray from the paths of your God, the God of all peoples, the only God."

XVI

Blood calls for blood!

In 1863 I was at the marriage of some Greek Christians of Bet-Sakur. Towards *asser* (three or four hours after midday according to the season), some villagers led a camel to the door of the bride's house, to carry her to the church and afterwards to the bridegroom's house.

The Bet-Sakur church is a little room, a sort of cellar in the ruined convent of St Posidonius situated in the Uedi el-Kerbe ten minutes from the village. It is used as a church because there is no better place.

Tied on to the crossbars of the camel's saddle were two cushions stuffed with straw and covered with a *mezuede*—a large red and green woollen carpet, doubled like a bag, the fringe being plaited and hung with enormous tassels. The camel's halter was adorned with shells, and hung with bits of looking-glass, bells, and many coloured tassels, as well as black and white ostrich feathers. The trappings were completed by a chest piece, a broad girth of yellow wool, the cords of which, like the tassels of the carpet, dragged on the ground; the Turkoman "Seiubend" did not forget to tie a talisman to it.

The mattress, cushions and covers which were to make the nuptial bed were then placed on the camel, and the bride was laid on the top of them, wrapped in her *sciambar* or veil of red silk. Then the bride's father ordered the camel to rise, took the leading rein and the procession began to move.

All went well as far as the church. The men led the way singing, dancing, juggling with their scimitars and letting off their guns. The women pressed round the camel, shouting their *zagarit* in strident tones.

On arriving at the church the bride and bridegroom entered, accompanied by their mothers and sisters and the marriage ceremony was performed. Outside, the country women sang and danced amongst themselves, while the men sat under the olive trees smoking their long pipes and talking; the poor children, left out in the cold, were all crying; this provoked cuffs and kicks from their parents by way of quieting them, a form of persuasion which naturally made them cry the louder.

The ceremony being over, the men led the procession as before, and began their antics and singing, on the way back to the village. As fate willed it, some of them were too lively. Words, bandied freely, caused a youth of the company to consider himself insulted. He instantly departed, calling to his friends to follow him. Unfortunately, some did so, and rushing into the nearest houses they received the wedding party on its arrival with stones, and the party, in its turn, replied with rifle shots. At the first shot

one of the aggressors fell dead, shot through the head. A looker-on, whether by accident or design called out the name of the murderer; he was a Garib. Without giving themselves time to verify the accusation, all the male members of the Garib took to their heels and fled. Disorder prevailed. The young bride, although abandoned by her nearest relatives, did not lose her head. She jumped down from her camel and ran to seek refuge in her father's house, where her husband was greatly relieved to find her again.

One single Garib, named Aisa, uncle of the murderer, had not fled. Being ill he could not attend the marriage. He and his wife were quietly at supper, taking no notice of the commotion, when suddenly the wife started; she had heard the cry of death. Urged by a fatal presentiment she extinguished the lamp, rushed to the door and closed it, and tried every means to induce her husband to hide himself. The wretched Aisa's hour had come. Laughing at his wife's fears he ordered her to open the door again, as he wished to know what was going on. Alas! the shouts came nearer. An armed and angry crowd advanced towards his house, the relatives of his nephew's victim at their head; he understood they had come for him. His house was surrounded, there was no longer time to escape and he refused to hide. He showed himself to his intending murderers ready to take blood for blood, but perceived only friendly faces. He guessed that he was to be the expiation for some unknown crime. He allowed himself to be seized, thrown down on the threshold of his own door, and done to death in cold blood, with incredible cruelty.

It is pitiful that the Christian Arabs of the nineteenth century observe the law of death for death, following, forgetful of the laws of the Gospels, only the precepts of the Koran—the sacred book of Islam. The force of tradition might excuse them from keeping to the Bible teaching, if they could be excused for believing in Christ, without having the courage to pardon offences and return good for evil. The law of death for death according to the Bible, considering the state of society in biblical times, was a just one; as prescribed by the Koran it is merely barbarous. In the Book of Genesis it is written: "Whoso sheddeth a man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." And in Leviticus: "And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again." The law of death for death is to be applied to the guilty. This is how the Koran interprets the Word of God: "Oh Believers! the law of death for death is ordered for murder, a free man for a free man, a slave for a slave, a woman for a woman."

XVII

Feisal el-Sceilan was the sixth of the seven sons of Neif to die a violent death. The surviving son is the Sheikh Azzak. Feisal was buried where his body was left. Lord Cornwallis, Governor-General of British India, when he lay dying at Ghazipore, repeated unwittingly a Beduin maxim: "Where the tree falls there let it rest."

If a Beduin dies in an encampment, he is buried beside his tent; if he falls in war or on *gazzu* the wild beasts devour him. Arab ceremonies are as simple as their lives. A most curious and interesting manner of burial is practised in Bethlehem, of which I was again a spectator this year, the very day of my departure for Neged.

The principal street was thronged with people; a funeral procession was anxiously awaited. The relations, friends, and all those residing in the same district were required to be present at the obsequies. The meeting place was before the door of the house. The deceased was a Christian of the Orthodox Greek Church, which we Catholics call "Schismatic"; he was surrounded by his nearest relatives; the women had ceased weeping or were weeping quietly, his priest prayed and the men repeated the prayer after him. The greatest sadness reigned in the house and complete indifference outside; children played about joking noisily, and continually crawled between the legs of my poor horse.

The crowd, already a large one, was increasing; every dirty lane in the village contributed lookers-on; the men came in silence, the women screaming their noisy *renanik*.

At last the funeral procession came out. Three boys carried the cross and candlesticks; behind them came the priest and then the bier, covered with an old black velvet pall and carried by all the men in succession. The procession went on towards the church, where prayers were to be said before taking the body to the cemetery. Only the male portion of the population followed; the women waited in the road for the relatives of the dead man, who did not keep them long. They rushed from the house like a horde of furies, screaming and gesticulating, with dry eyes, flowing hair and breasts uncovered. They ran to the cemetery, and in order to run quicker, held up their long skirts far above the knee. On reaching the grave, the mother and wife threw themselves on the ground, one on each side; the rest of the relations sat round and behind them, while all the women of the village pressed as close as possible. The mother, tearing her shirt open from the top to the bottom, displayed her bare bosom, and wrinkled stomach; she then began to sing in a hoarse, monotonous voice

the praises of her son, accompanying the song with a rhythmical movement of the head from right to left, and raising her hands to her chest with the utmost regularity, the left hand on the right and the right on the left. From time to time, when singing of having borne and nursed her son, she hit her chest and stomach with her closed fist in anger. The relatives repeated her words after her, making the same movements with both their heads and hands. The wife constantly interrupted the mother; her voice was stronger, her song less slow, and less lugubrious. She accompanied it, swaying her body backwards and forwards.

The arrival of the funeral procession put an end to the women's lamentations over the grave, whence they were packed off very roughly. They then went and formed themselves into two circles in the market-place. In the principal ring were the relations; the second was composed of their female friends from their own quarter.

The songs began over again, but were no longer lugubrious, the verses being recited quickly. The women in the outer circle walked at a moderate pace; at intervals, indicated by a pause in the song, they let go their hands to wave their handkerchiefs. Those in the inner circle behaved like delirious witches and bacchantes; and when, as often happened, one of them cried out "two jumps, three jumps for the dead man", it seemed as if one was witnessing a dance of wild beasts, they leapt and screamed so madly. The woman who jumped the highest was considered the best and most zealous.

While the women were behaving thus, the men, having rendered to the earth that which belonged to it, began to argue amongst themselves. Each one claimed the right of inviting the company to dinner, and of sending food for the day to the dead man's family. The good priest was informed of the female saturnalia taking place in the market-place, although he had forbidden it a thousand times; he soon made the meeting accept the invitation of the loudest speaker, broke up the women's choruses by stoning them, and forced them to retire to their houses as quickly as they had left them an hour earlier. Their flight was so absurd that it was impossible not to laugh, and all joined in. Thus a mourning scene was turned into one of noisy hilarity.

In Bethlehem, as in all the towns, villages and encampments of Palestine, the *naddabat*, mentioned in Amos and Jeremiah, are often found; they are the women who weep as a profession, "who understand making a funeral lament". In the towns they are paid for it, but the villagers and tribesmen do not sell their tears. They are obliged to have a strong voice because the song of their lamentation must be very loud; they accompany the female relations of the dead to the burying-place on the day of the

death, and return there twice, on the seventh and the fortieth days. In the villages and encampments they are practically useless, for there is no woman who cannot improvise some sort of lament; in the towns it is quite another thing, for without the *naddabat* a dead person could not be properly mourned.

Another Bible custom which has been handed down to our days, and is a very praiseworthy one, orders that abundant provisions should be sent to the deceased person's house for three days, so that all may eat, as it is written in Ezekiel (xxiv, 17), the bread of men. It is a duty which all the neighbours render to each other with gladness.

These two customs date back to remote antiquity and will go on to future generations; but the day will come when we shall no longer witness those degrading choruses, which the Christian and Mohammedan women make in honour of their dead. These choruses remind one of the sacred dances which the Arabs made round the idols or emblems of their divinities in idolatrous times. The Latin, or Christian women practising Latin rites, will not permit them except secretly in their houses, and it will not be long before they give them up entirely; it has been shown that the Schismatic Greek Church priests will not tolerate them publicly, and their parishioners cannot long resist their wishes, while the Mohammedan women will, sooner or later, follow the example of the Christians.

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Map of
Northern Arabia
to illustrate the itinerary
of
Carlo Guarnani
Jan. to May, 1864

Scale 0 10 20 30 40 Miles

- Railway
- Disused Railway
- Sand Area
- Volcanic Area
- Well, Ruin, Fort
- Guarmani's Route

